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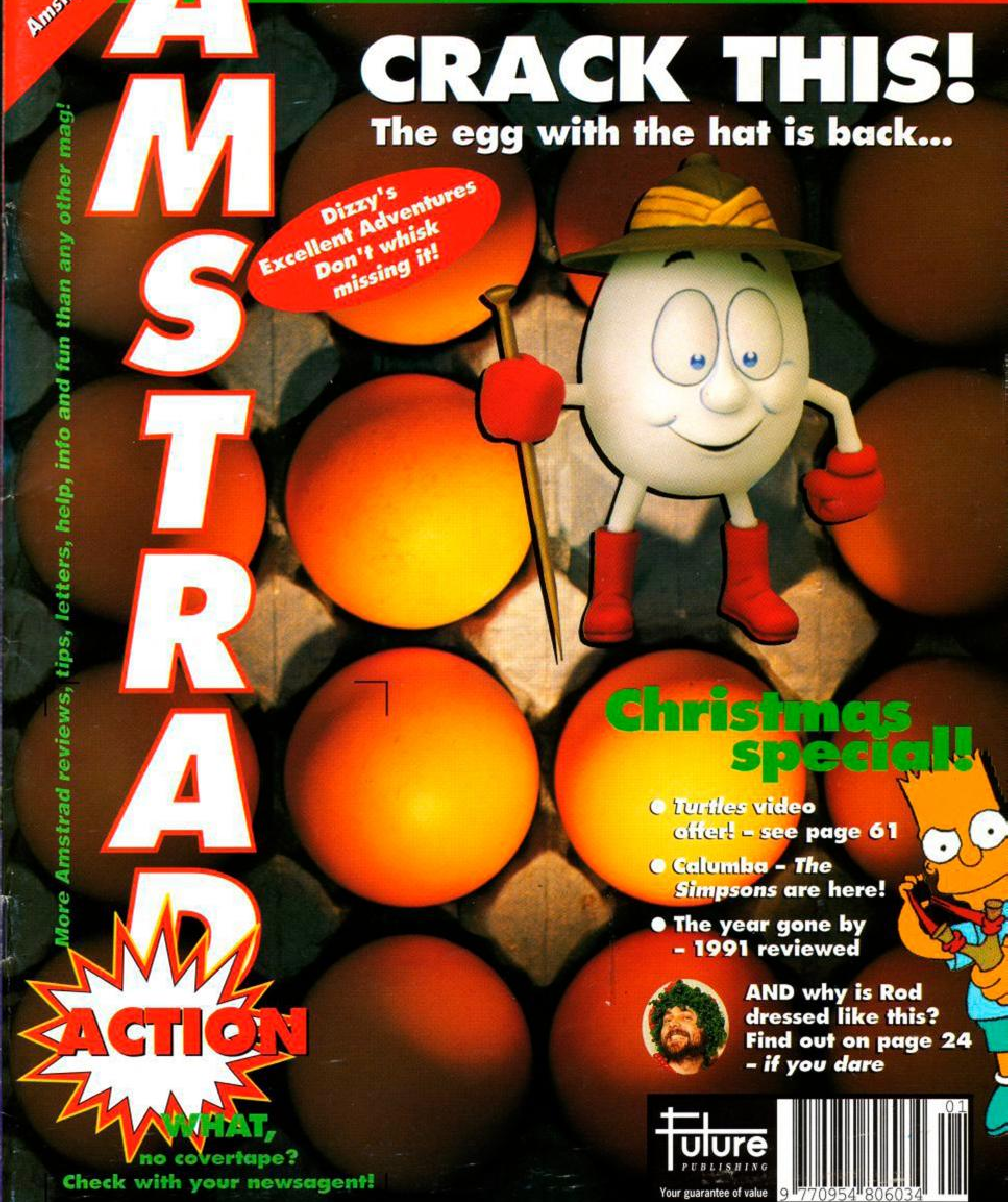


ISSUE No. 76
JANUARY 1992
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- ***This month there's a festive feast of Type-ins on the cover – but would it make sense from now on to put them on the covertape. Let us know what you think!***

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LINE UP



DIZZY'S EXCELLENT ADVENTURES 38

Last year, the *Dizzy Collection* was BIG. This one is going to be BIGGER



THE AA PANTO 24

The *Amstrad Action* team as you've never seen them before in a deeply moving (*as in bowels – ed*) of a Christmas panto classic – *CINDERELLA*

THE SIMPSONS



28

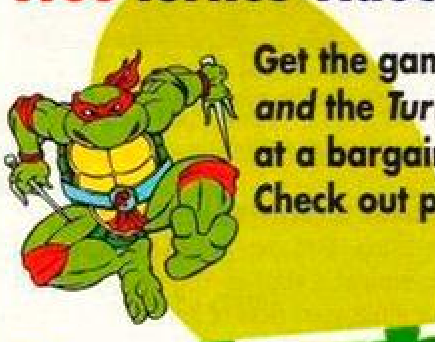
We ate our shorts... well, almost...

THAT WAS THE YEAR THAT WAS

1991 62

The year that changed history (*er, don't they all? – ed*) – 1991 reviewed

Free turtles video offer



Get the game *and the Turtles* video at a bargain price. Check out page 61...



ACTION Pack 6

- *Graphic Adventure Creator* – the complete program! Beginners' instructions on page 8
- *Southern Belle* – complete game
- *Pagemaker Plus* – a complete text-based DTP prog. Instructions on page 10
- *Extended BASIC* – 6128 commands on a 464!
- Pokes galore!

ACTION Pack



HOW TO LOAD THE COVERTAPE

Loading the programs couldn't be easier! Type RUN" (followed by RETURN) and press a key to start the tape. (A shortcut way to get RUN" is to hold down CONTROL and tap the small ENTER key.)

A menu screen will appear in a short time. Select the program you wish to load. Press SPACE to highlight the program you want followed by RETURN to load the program. *Graphic Adventure Creator* and *Southern Belle* are on side one of the tape.

***Pagemaker Plus, Extended BASIC* and the pokes are on side two. Turn the tape over and rewind to the begining to load these programs.**

Note that all the programs on side two must be loaded direcly from BASIC with the RUN" command.

● If you have a disk drive connected to your machine you'll first have to type |TAPE to switch the machine to tape loading rather than disk loading. (The | is obtained by pressing SHIFT and @) The computer will load the next program.

SOUTHERN BELLE

Yo posse, the *AA* team reckon this is one of the bestest cover tape games we've ever had. We've been really getting into it...

Here's the SP – You're driving a train along the London Victoria to Brighton line. You have to build up a good head of steam, keep within speed limits, and stop at the stations on the timetable.

There's a number of different types of run you can go for, from a simple training run (no stops) to a problem run, where leaves fall on the track and stray llamas leap out in front of you (or something like that, anyway). You can also select how much control you want over the train. Take our advice, it's hard enough on Option 1, so stick with that for the time being.

The Cut Off (C) controls the time that smoke is allowed into the cylinder, and has five positions (0%, 20%, 35%, 55% and 75%). When starting away it is usual to go for the full 75%. During the run, the Cut Off can be used to change the mix in the cylinder. Use the smoke demonstration keys to check you've got the right mix, and then jiggle things about if you haven't.

The Regulator (R) is indicated by a lever on the top left of the cab. This controls the flow of steam to the cylinders. It has five positions, from fully closed (on the right) to fully open (on the left). Basically this is the thing you use to speed up and slow down.



● Watch that cut-off setting – you're not supposed to make too much smoke in the station.



● 28mph is a pretty fair lick considering you're only just approaching Battersea Park...

The Vacuum Brake (V) is a kind of emergency brake thing. You get penalised for using this on full to stop at a station. You need to put it on though for a hill start (lots of stations on route are set on slopes – check the gradient window), releasing it once the cut off and regulator are set at the correct level.

Position (P) shows you how far out you are from Victoria. Compare this to the **Timetable (T)** to see how far away you are from the next stopping station. **Gradient (G)** shows you, er, the gradient. Doing certain things will help you get up hills quicker, probably.

To start off, first check you're not in Demo mode (*ho ho – ed*), then hit **C** four times and **R** twice. After a brief pause you'll start to move. Press **R** twice again once you're going over 4 mph, and you're rolling.

The **A** key switches from real-time (we love real-time simulators!) to fast mode, but switch back to real-time when approaching a station. Hitting **E** when the Timetable is displayed will show you a list of your major foul-ups so far.

Adam P has actually travelled on the first section of this line a lot to see Charlton Athletic at Selhurst Park (*shhhh – Adam*), and he reckons it's dead realistic. All the bridges and stuff are in the right place. The only unrealistic bit is that it's quite hard to be any more than ten minutes late pulling into Balham. British Rail, grrrr...



● There's your timetable. Hmm... looks pretty straightforward, but you're going to have to work to keep to it.

● *Southern Belle controls (keyboard only)*

W	Sound Whistle
RETURN	Stoke fire
R/CTRL+R	Increase/decrease regulator
V/CTRL+V	Increase/decrease vacuum brake
C/CTRL+C	Increase/decrease cut off
B/CTRL+B	Increase/decrease blower
I/CTRL+I	Increase/decrease injector
F/CTRL+F	Open/close firedoor
D/CTRL+D	Increase/decrease damper
A	Accelerated speed/real time
S	Smoke on/smoke off
COPY	Return to main menu
H	Pause (wait for RETURN to restart)
G	Display signal/gradient
P	Display position of train
T	Display timetable
SPACE	Acknowledge message
KEYS 1-4	Smoke demonstration keys (3 is the correct smoke density)

(*Blimey, what a lot of controls – ed.*)

POKES GALORE!

This month's covertape boasts a brand new feature – pokes! Pokes alter the contents of your computer's memory, and can be used to give infinite lives, energy etc on tough games.

Previously, we printed pokes in the *Cheat Mode* section, but when typing in listings errors are almost bound to occur. Now, though, all you have to do is simply load the pokes from the covertape!

This month's tape has pokes for all the following:

- **Turrican 2 (AA73 covertape demo)**
- **Thunderjaws (AA73 covertape demo)**
- **Hobgoblin**
- **Lopears**
- **Bombjack 1**
- **Bombjack 2**
- **Ghosts 'n' Goblins**
- **North and South**

Full instructions on loading and using the pokes are printed in this month's *Cheat Mode* section on page 32. Happy cheating!

Tape Trouble?

If you have problems loading the tape, try the following:

- Try loading at several different volume levels if you're using an external tape recorder. Computers can be very fussy about the volume they will load at.
- Clean the tape heads. This can be done with any commercially available cleaning kit. Alternatively, use a cotton bud soaked in alcohol. Gently rub the surface of the heads and pinch roller to remove that layer of accumulated grime.
- Adjust the cassette recorder's head alignment. The alignment screw is located just to the left of the tape head, and is usually accessible through a small hole. Rotate it a fraction at a time with a jeweller's screw-driver. When the crispest sound is heard, the alignment is spot on.
- Sometimes the tape spools can jam or stick at a critical moment. Check the spools in your cassette rotate freely, if necessary giving the casing a slight tap against a table edge just to make sure. If, after trying the all of the above, you still can't get the tape to load then you can return it for a replacement. Send the tape, along with an SAE to:

AA76 Covertape Returns, Ablex Audio Video Ltd, Harcourt, Halesford 14, Telford, Shropshire TF7 4QD

DISK DRIVE OWNERS READ THIS!

If you have a disk drive, you'll only ever have to load from the tape once – all programs are transferred easily to disk.

Insert a blank formatted disk into the drive and the covertape at the start of side one into your cassette player. Connect the REM socket if you have one (6128 owners) – it'll automatically stop the tape in the right places when accessing the disk drive.

Load the menu program in the normal way and select the TRANSFER TO DISK option. Follow the on-screen instructions and press a key when the computer asks you to. It's as simple as that!

Should you experience problems you'll be asked to rewind the tape and try again. Don't panic if this happens – follow the advice for tape loading troubles.

DISK OFFER

Owners of the 6128 Plus are unable to connect a cassette recorder to their machines.

If these or any other users would like a copy on disk, simply send your name and address along with a cheque/PO for £2.00 made payable to Ablex Audio Video Ltd to:

AA76 disk offer,
Ablex Audio Video Ltd., Harcourt, Halesford 14, Telford, Shropshire TF7 4QD.

EXTENDED BASIC

Young Shabaz Yousaf did us proud last month with his excellent Type-ins and mini hardware project. This month we're proud to bring you his brilliant extended BASIC. Just look at all those yummy RSXs...!

We'll go into more detail on some of these commands next time, but for now you can probably work most of them out for yourselves.

RSX — **PARAMETERS**

|HELP, |H
Displays list of commands & uses

|FRAME, |FLYBACK
Waits for frame flyback

|SPRITE ,*address of sprite table,x,y*
Prints full-colour sprite

|COPYCHR, |READCHAR ,*@stream%*
Reads a char. from screen. stream%=stream no. on entry, char. on exit.

|CLEAR.INPUT, |FLUSH
Flushes keyboard buffer

|GRAPHICS.PEN, |GPEN ,*col*
Sets graphics pen

|GRAPHICS.PAPER, |GPAPER ,*col*
Sets graphics paper

|GRAPHICS.MODE, |GMODE ,*mode%*
Sets graphics mode 0=FILL 1=XOR 2=AND 3=OR

|ON.BREAK.CONT, |BCONT
Disables Esc key

|ON.BREAK.STOP, |BSTOP
Enables Esc key

|MOTOR.ON, |MON
Switches motor on

|MOTOR.OFF, |MOFF
Switches motor off

|CURSOR.CHECK, |CCHECK ,*@xx,@yy*
Checks once to see if any cursor key has been pressed, and sets variables accordingly.

|RSX
,*@name$,address of routine,addr of RSX code*
Installs an RSX – very useful!

|PAUSE, |DELAY
Pauses program until key is pressed

|DOUBLE.POKE, |DOKE ,*address,poke*
POKEs a 16bit no.

|DOUBLE.PEEK, |DEEK ,*@address%*
PEEKs a 16bit no. on entry address%=address, on exit address%=no. PEEKed.

|TEXT.POKE, |TOKE ,*@string$,address*
POKEs a string into memory.

|ENCODE, |SCRAMBLE ,*@string$,@password$*
Sophisticated XOR protection system. string$ is encoded, to decode repeat command.

|RESET.TIME, |RTIME
Resets TIME variable to zero.

|BIG.TEXT, |BTEXT ,*@string$*
Double-height text

|FAST.LOAD, |FLOAD ,*address,length,@filename$*
New loading system – SAVEs as one long file – no blocks!

|FAST.SAVE, |FSAVE ,*address,length@filename$*
See above

|PROMPTS.ON, |PON
Switches prompts on for above loading system.

|PROMPTS.OFF, |POFF
Opposite to above

|FAST.CATALOGUE, |FAST.CAT, |FCAT
Same as CAT for the new loading system.

|COLOURED.TEXT, |CTEXT ,*@string$*
Similar to a previous prog. in AA, but better, because this one works in any mode.

|WIGGLY.TEXT, |WTEXT ,*@string$,x,y*
Try it – you'll like it! x and y are GRAPHICS co-ords.

Graphic Adventure Creator

The *Graphic Adventure Creator*, like a machine code assembler, is not something you can just load in and use straight away – it can take months to learn properly. But the *basics* can be learnt very quickly:

In this brief guide we will write a small, two-location 'adventure' which should help you get to grips with the program. But to write a good adventure you will need the booklet (see later).

So, let's get down to business. You've loaded in *GAC*, but what do all those menus mean?



● *GAC* is pretty easy to follow, but to really get into it you may need the accompanying manual. (See offer opposite.)

The first thing you must do is load in the quickstart file (explained in the panel opposite). To do this, type T on the menu for 'load adventure' and then type T for 'tape' followed by the filename QS.ADV. The quickstart file will now be loaded and you'll return to the main menu.

So, you've got the quickstart file, but as yet you haven't got any locations. Type R on the menu.

You are now in the 'Rooms' subsection and the program will be asking you for a room number. Type 1 and then type in the room description:

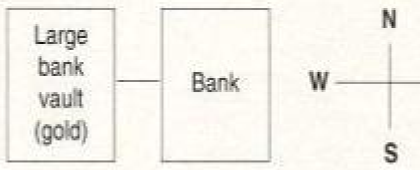
```
'You are in a large bank vault.'
```

You will then be prompted for connections – i.e. where can you go from this room? Type:

```
EAST 2
```

Which means if you type EAST (or E) you will go to room 2.

You will then be asked for a picture number



– for now just press Return (or though later you should play with the Graphics menu – it's fun!).

Now we need to enter a room 2 that people can go east into! So:

```
Which Room number? 2
You are in a bank.
Connections are...
WEST 1
```

To quit back to the main menu, hit Escape twice. Now you're back at the main menu you can test what you've done so far. Press Enter/Return to go into the adventure...

And you'll find yourself standing in a large bank vault! Granted you can't do much apart from walk between the bank and the vault but it's a start!

Finally, for our example adventure let's add an object. Press O from the main menu (if you're still in the game press Escape twice to return to the menu).

We'll number our object 1 and give it the description **'a bar of gold'** (the input routine should be familiar to you now – it's the same as room entry), and you want the bar to start in room 1 (the bank vault). Set the weight to zero, as we're not imposing carrying limits in this example.

Now go back to the main menu and enter the game again – you should also be able to see a bar of gold in the vault but you won't be able to do anything with it as we haven't written that in the code yet!

First we'll have to set up 'gold' as a noun – go to the nouns menu and type **'1 gold'** – this means that noun 1 is gold... But what if someone typed **'get bar'**? So add **'1 bar'** as well (and add **'ingot'** too if you want to show off!).

So, we've now set up the object as a noun but we haven't set up the get and drop routines. To do this we need to go into Low priority conditions. Our first input should be line 8 (lines 1 to 7 are used by Quickstart). Type:

```
IF (VERB 7 AND NOUN 1 AND HERE 1)
GET 1 OKAY END
```

Whoa! What did all that mean? Well, if you look in the verbs menu you'll see that verb 7 is get (or take), noun 1 you've just set up and HERE 1 checks to see if object 1 (bar of gold) is here – i.e. in the location!

So, if you typed **get bar** (or some variation) and the bar is here then GET 1 (gets object 1), print **okay** (OKAY) and then **END** (END is like a full stop in English – it tells the computer that you've finished the routine. Clever, huh?



● *GAC* contains all you need to write your own stand-alone adventures.

We've written a get gold routine, so now we need to write a similar drop routine on line 9 of the low priority conditions:

```
IF (VERB 8
AND NOUN 1
AND CARR 1)
DROP 1 OKAY
END
```

CARR just checks to see if an object's being carried. Let's also make it so you can type **examine gold** in line 10:

```
IF (VERB 16 AND NOUN 1 AND AVAI
1) MESS 1 END
```

Verb 16 is examine, AVAI returns true if object is available for us (is HERE or CARR) and MESS 1 prints message 1 on the screen...

But we haven't defined message 1 yet! Whoops, let's go and do that now... Press ESC twice to get back to the main menu and select messages, then choose message one and type **It looks like it could be worth thousands!**

Competition Time!

Yep! You guessed it – we're running a competition for the best *GAC* game written with this covertape prog. To stop people cheating and sending in games they wrote three years ago (not that we don't trust you or anything) we've decided to write a little storyline...

"You are intrepid staff writer Adam Peters, saviour of the innocents and all round Mr. Nice Guy, who has been magically transported to the Balrog's lair – quite what will happen next is unknown but you must rescue a damsel in distress, Princess Maryanne, who the Balg has captured..."

That's it – all you have to do is use your new-found *GAC* skills to write an adventure based around the above storyline. The prize? The winner's game will appear on a future covertape, which will probably lead to more fame than Michael Jackson and oodles of money (err... well probably not, but you can dream!).

The closing date is not until 1st November 1992, so you have lots of time to write in to the *GAC* clinic with questions as well as reading the programming tutorials which will be appearing in the Balrog section. The only other stipulation is that games must be sent in with a full solution and map, as well as any other items that you think might be helpful (£5 notes appreciated!). If your game has a really clever routine, or a really hilarious response, then tell me when you write in else I might not see it!

Remember, there is no rush to send your game in, so wait a while to read the tutorials in the next few issues...

– getting started

INSTRUCTION BOOKLET OFFER

This article is the tip of the proverbial iceberg when explaining how to use *GAC*. If you're serious about making the most of this program, then write to: **GAC Booklet, Amstrad Action, Beauford Court, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW**, enclosing a cheque/postal order for £2.99 made payable to Future Publishing Ltd and we'll send you a copy of the instruction book.

Now select 'save adventure' from the main menu and save on a blank tape/disk as a datafile.

Go back to the main menu and (roll the drums!) enter the adventure – you should be able to carry the gold around, drop it and examine it! Now the adventure purists reading this probably won't be very impressed – but it's a start! If you want to know more, tune in in next month's Balrog section...

What is QS.ADV?

QS.ADV is a quickstart file which saves you some typing – it has many system messages (such as "You are carrying" and "What now?..."), many useful verbs (examine, north, south, east, west, look etc.) and several of the common low priority conditions associated with them. This is to allow you get into writing your adventure without having to write the basics each time.

The Quickstart data file explained

VERBS

6................D
6................DOWN
8................DROP
3................E
3................EAST
16..............EXAMINE
7................GET
13..............GRAPHICS
10..............INVENTORY
9................L
10..............LIST
15..............LOAD
9................LOOK
1................N
1................NORTH
13..............PICTURES
11..............QUIT
15..............RESTORE
2................S
14..............SAVE
2................SOUTH
7................TAKE
12..............TEXT
5................U
5................UP
4................W
4................WEST
12..............WORDS

MESSAGES

239............You are carrying
240............What now?...
241............You can't.
242............Pardon?
243............Press a key for another game...
244............Are you sure (Y/N)...
245............You've already got that.
246............You haven't got that.
247............You can't see that
248............You're carrying too much to pick that up.
249............Your score was
250............ and you took
251............It is dark. You can't see.
252............I can't find that anywhere.
253............You can also see
254............Okay
255............ turns.

NOUNS

255............IT

LOW PRIORITY CONDITIONS

IF (VERB 9) LOOK WAIT END

If you typed 'look', redescribe the room you're in and wait for a new command.

IF (VERB 10) MESS 239 LIST WITH WAIT END

If you typed 'inventory' then print 'You are carrying ' and list all the objects that are with you.

IF (VERB 11) QUIT OKAY END

If you typed 'quit' then ask the adventurer if they are sure and if they respond yes then quit, otherwise print okay and continue.

IF (VERB 12) TEXT OKAY END

If you typed 'text' then turn the pictures off.

IF (VERB 13) PICT OKAY END

If you typed 'pictures' then turn the pictures on.

IF (VERB 14) SAVE OKAY END

If you typed 'save' then save the game position to tape or disc.

IF (VERB 15) LOAD LOOK WAIT END

If you typed 'load' then load a previously saved game position from tape or disc, then describe the room you are in.

What do all those menus mean?

Adverbs
Used for words like 'in', 'out' (ADVE is used to check if one has been typed)

Begin Where
Tells *GAC* where the adventure starts (i.e. if you type 2 in our example you will start in the bank location).

Conditions (LOCAL)
Room-specific, these conditions can be used for puzzles. (For example we could have had a local condition that if in room 1 and input was 'get gold' then a message would be printed (alarm bells sounds).)

Graphics
Great fun to play with – any room in a *GAC* game can have a graphic, subject to memory limitations.

High Priority Conditions
Err... The highest priority conditions! These conditions are checked before the others, so you could code a puzzle which depended on a time limit, amongst other things.

Low Priority Conditions
Whatever the player types, these conditions check to see if the input is correct – i.e. in our bank example 'get gold' is an LPC.

Messages
Used for describing objects, events etc.

Nouns
Like adverbs.

Objects
See bar of gold example.

Printer Menu
Lets you print out your program.

Room Descriptions
Used for location descriptions.

Save adventure
Obvious! You can save your file as an executable (which means you could load it independently of *GAC*) or as a data file (which can be loaded back into *GAC*).

Verbs
Like nouns/adverbs...

Erase adventure data
Don't do this unless you're really sure, as it will delete everything you've typed in!

Enter adventure
Play adventure you are writing (used for testing routines).

Pagemaker Plus-T instructions

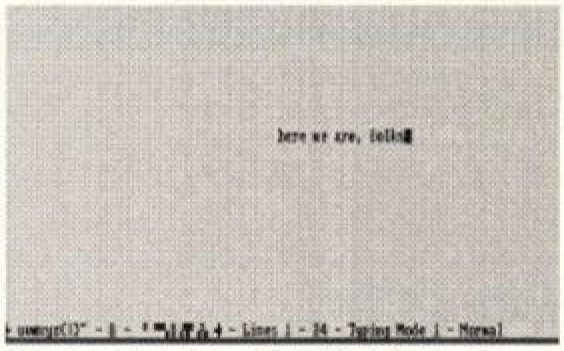
When you first receive the program, MAKE A BACK-UP. Keep the original in a safe place and work only with the back-up. Now run the program (type RUN "PAGEMAKER.1"). Because the *AA* version was modified to run on the 464, only two fonts are available, 'standard' or 'thin'. Choose which you want to use. You will now be given a choice of whether to Print or Edit. As you've not got anything to print yet, choose Edit.

After the editor has loaded, a blank screen with a flashing square in the centre will appear. This is the 'cursor', and indicates the position that text will appear at when typed. To move it, use the arrow keys. Text is typed straight onto the screen and the cursor can be moved any time.

All the keyboard characters (except characters accessed by [CTRL/key]) can be typed. The rest of the ASCII character set, which are not usually available, can be copied onto the screen using the charbar. The charbar is shown at the bottom of the screen in the status window (see screen shot).

The charbar is made up from ten characters (area A), a single character (area B) and a further ten characters (area C). The character in area B is copied on to the screen by pressing COPY. The charbar is scrolled by pressing the SHIFT+LEFT/RIGHT arrow keys, thus enabling the characters in areas A and C to be moved into area B. Not all the possible characters are shown at any one time but they will become visible by scrolling.

The 'Lines 1-24' message shows which part of the canvas/page is currently on-screen. There are 72 lines in all but only 24 are visible at any one time. To scroll up and down by one line use the SHIFT+UP/DOWN arrow keys. To scroll by a larger chunk (16 lines) use the CTRL+UP/DOWN arrow keys.



● **Yes, well, we haven't finished it yet... the status bar is at the bottom of the screen.**

Pressing TAB will erase the status window and display the first menu. A disk menu is available (by pressing TAB again or D from the first menu) and this includes a few functions which will generate errors on the cassette version, but have been included so that the program works properly on disk. A third TAB returns the status window. To select an option from either menu press the inverted character on the keyboard.

Disk users

A 664/6128 version of *Pagemaker Plus* is available which contains over 15 fonts plus sample pages. To receive a copy, just send £1.75 plus two disks and a stamped SAE. As well as *Pagemaker Plus*, you will also receive the Help Sheet and a copy of *CPC Domain* disk magazine. For 6128 owners, *Pagemaker Deluxe* is available for £3.50 plus a disk and stamped SAE, and it's a thousand times better than *Pagemaker Plus*! (*That's enough free plugs – ed*)

Almost everything has been covered except the headline font. This is standard and cannot be changed. It covers UPPER CASE letters A to Z and the relevant letter is typed using CTRL+letter. Other headlines can be made up by copying characters from the charbar. Please note that because CTRL+M generates the same code as the ENTER keys, the large ENTER key has been disabled and so the small ENTER key must be used when entering filenames etc. If you press the small ENTER key when editing an M character will appear – sorry!

Printing

To print, run the program as before but this time select PRINT instead of EDIT. You will be asked for a filename (maximum eight letters), and the program will load FILENAME.PM+. The printing routine (machine code by David Wild) works only on Epson-compatible printers. The quality will depend on how old your ribbon is. Reset the computer and printer before printing another page. Please note that the Quality option will only work on printers that do reverse line-feeds. In the case of the Star LC-10 you must use tractor paper. This may be the same with other printers.

Finally...

If you need help with any aspect of *Pagemaker Plus* then please write to: **Alan Scully, 119 Laurel Drive, East Kilbride, Glasgow G75 9JG.** A Help Sheet is available which details the most common problems users have, and also how to alter the program to include graphics. To receive a copy, just send a stamped SAE (with an optional donation, say 50p – remember, this is optional, you are under no obligation to send anything!).

THE MENUS

Menu 1

- **DISK** .... Selects the Disk menu (or press TAB again)
- **NEW** .... New canvas. Type Y (then ENTER) to confirm, N (then ENTER) to cancel
- **1** .... Changes to typing mode 1. Cursor moves right one position when a character is typed or copied (Current mode shown in status window)
- **2** .... Changes to typing mode 2. Cursor does not move right (Current mode shown in status window)
- **DUMPSCREEN** .... Loads a 17K standard screen and dumps it to printer (disk only)
- **TEXTTYPE** .... Toggles between the style text is typed on to canvas. Current style show in status window: Normal, Double, Inverse, Inverse Double
- **DISPLAY** .... Toggles between display mode 1 (double height and inverse shown as they will appear when printed) or mode 2 (not shown). Mode 2 is faster if double height & inverse is used a lot
- **PREVIEW** .... Shows a miniature of the canvas. Text appears as shaded areas. Takes a while but can be helpful
- **KUT** .... Stores the LINE the cursor is on in memory
- **PASTE** .... Pastes the stored LINE on top of the line cursor is on

Menu 2 (Disk Menu)

- **CAT** .... Catalogues a cassette
- **SAVE** .... Saves a page. Requests filename and saves as FILENAME.PM+
- **A** .... Selects drive A for loading, saving, etc (disk only)
- **B** .... Selects drive B for loading, saving, etc (disk only)
- **IERA,"*.BAK'** .... Erases all BAcKup files on disk
- **SAVE SCREEN** .... Save the 24 lines on a screen. Requests filename (maximum eight letters), saves FILENAME.PMS
- **LOAD SCREEN** .... Load a saved 24-line screen and replace the 24 lines on screen with those loaded. Requests filename, loads FILENAME.PMS

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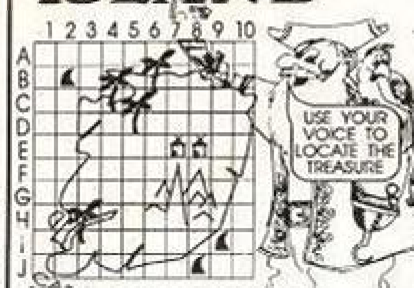
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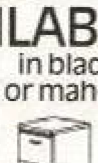
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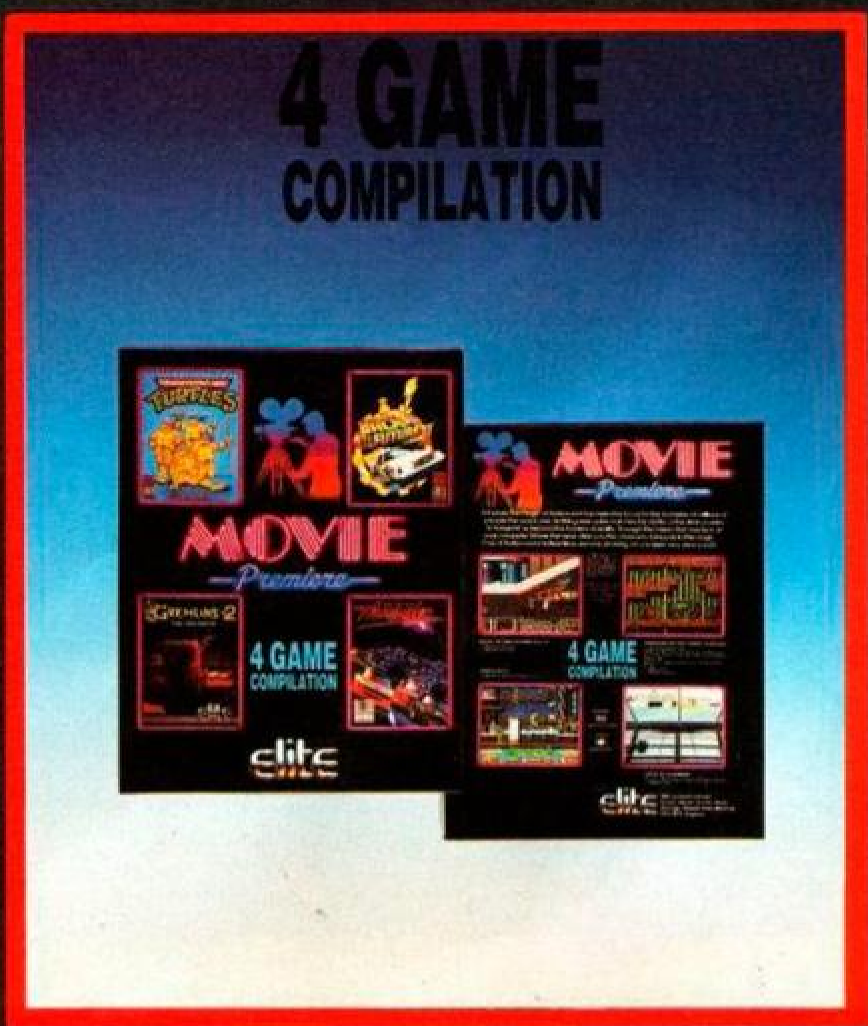


FORMATS

Commodore Amiga, Atari ST, IBM/PC 3½", IBM/PC 5¼", Commodore 64 disc, Commodore 64 cassette, Spectrum cassette, Amstrad cassette, Amstrad disc.

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3.5-inch drive from SD Micro-Systems

SD Micro-Systems has joined the band of peripherals suppliers offering Amstrad users a 3.5-inch second drive.

The SD drive offers the usual dual modes – either the 180K supported by CP/M and Amsdos, or 800K, via the special software supplied as part of the package.

The drive unit itself (made by TEAC) measures only 7"x 4" x 1" but carries still carries a side switch (you can't 'flip' 3.5-inch disks like you can 3-inch floppies).

The price is £79.95, which includes a power supply and the necessary cabling to connect to your machine. (464 owners must already have an Amstrad DD1 drive connected to their machine, and Plus owners should contact SD Micro-Systems before ordering to check the availability of adaptors). Postage and packing is £4.50 by post, with next-day courier delivery available for £7.

Also included are five 3.5-inch disks, with further disks being offered for just £5.00 for 10 (plus £1 p&p).

Clip-art add-ons

SD Microsystems has also been active with its DTP products. The company has updated its *Page Publisher* DTP program to be compatible with the AMX mouse. The program upgrade is £5.00.

It has also come up with a whole library of clip art sourced from the public domain and converted to *Page Publisher* format – a special version for *Stop Press* users is also available. Pictures include nature, animals, special occasions, sport, pastimes, work and more. There are over 360 drawings on the disk, which is on offer for £12.50.

The mouse upgrade and picture disk can be bought together for £15.00

Fujitsu DL900 down in price

The 24-pin, wide-carriage Fujitsu, which we gave 90% when we reviewed it in *AA74*, is down in price!

We thought it was pretty good value already, at £294, but now the machine has been reduced to £249. At that price we reckon it's excellent value.



• The Fujitsu DL900 is now down in price!

Scull PD changes

Alan Scull's public domain library is from now only going to be open only to subscribers to *CPC Domain*, the library's regular magazine.

This is because of 'time constraints', says Alan, who has, however, 'drastically reduced' copying prices for subscribers. You can now get a whole disk full of software for only 75p when you supply the disk and a return SAE.

And there's more! *CPC Domain* isn't going to be printed from now on! Instead, it will be supplied on disk (as a 'disk-zine'). Each 'issue' will consist not only of all the usual news, features, articles and reviews, but samples of the latest PD software – a 'sort of cover disk', according to Scully!

To order a copy of disk-based *CPC Domain* (the next issue will be supplied with *Locomotive BASIC Compiler*) send £1.25 plus a disk and stamped SAE to: **CPC Domain, 119 Laurel Drive, East Kilbride, Glasgow G75 9JG.** Alternatively, for information about the library and *CPC Domain*, just send a stamped SAE.



• Scull PD's *CPC Domain* is now going disk-only.

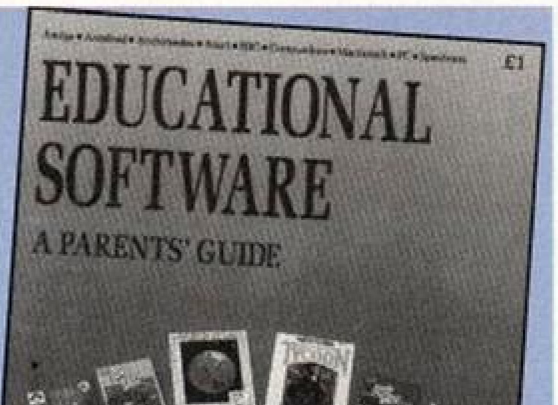
New educational catalogue

Rickitt Educational Media is the largest supplier of educational software for the CPC. And it has just released its new catalogue – *Educational Software – a Parents' Guide.*

This is just one of three catalogues published annually by Rickitt, and contains a compilation of over 200 of the best educational programs – many available on the Amstrad.

Rickitt also publishes a *Primary Edition*, which lists around 500 programs, and a *Comprehensive Edition* (over 1,000 programs).

Parents interested in the latest educational software can find *Educational Software – a Parents' Guide* at most leading newsagents, selling at £1. However, *Amstrad Action* readers can obtain the catalogue free of charge from by writing to the following address and mentioning *AA*: **Rickitt Educational Media, Ilton, Ilminster, Somerset TA19 9HS (0460 57152).**



• Rickitt Educational Media's new *Parents Guide* is now out – £1 in the shops, free to *AA* readers.

Future show breaks all records!

Future Publishing's very first computer show turned out to be the biggest ever. OK, so it was centred around those boring Commodore machines, but there was still plenty there to interest owners of all formats – including demonstrations of Commodore's CDTV system and a virtual reality demo, plus loads of arcade cabinets, exhibitions and bargs.

A total of 35,790 visitors turned up for the show, and Future is already looking forward to next year's event.

Final Fight is 128K only

When we reviewed *Final Fight*, (*AA74*), we didn't realise the game was 128K-only. Owners of 64K machines beware! This applies both to the copies in the shops and those available from *Amstrad Action's* Special Offers pages.

CHARTS

Welcome to Amstrad Action's very own software charts. We compare all your charts with what's happening in the shops and compile an exclusive AA guide to what's hot on the street...

FULL-PRICE

▲ NEW ENTRY ■ NO CHANGE ▲ GOING UP ▼ GOING DOWN

1	**Terminator 2** *Ocean* — Arnie's still there, but can he hold on for the Christmas number one? Stay tuned. (RAVE!)	AA74 89%	■	1
2	**Dizzy Collection** *Codemasters* — Blimey, the original Dizzy compo is still battling away a year after it's original release...	Not reviewed	▲	6
3	**Cartoon Collection** *Codemasters* — ...and a new Codies compo has leapt in to join it. The new Dizzy compo is still to come!	AA76 75%	▲	–
4	**World Class Rugby** *Audiogenic* — England almost won some big rugger tournie this year. Well done chaps. (RAVE!)	AA75 87%	▲	–
5	**Final Fight** *US Gold* — US Gold's bostin' (128K only) beat-em-up. Kicking and punching ahoy! (MASTER GAME)	AA74 93%	▼	2
6	**Manchester United Europe** *Krisalis* — The Red Devils, as they're called, in a reasonable footie sim. We're backing Leeds.	AA75 73%	▼	3
7	**Rainbow Collection** *Ocean* — Three cute-em-ups that will make you chunder over your keyboard. They're good, mind.	Not Reviewed	▼	4
8	**Capcom Collection** *US Gold* — Serious blasting ahoy! One of US Gold's two Chrimbo compos (watch out for *MAX Pack* too).	Not Reviewed	▲	–
9	**Smash TV** *Ocean* — Timid chart entry for *AA's* game of the year. Come on, buy it – it's great. (MASTER GAME)	AA75 96%	▲	–
10	**Big Box** *Beau Jolly* — Still hanging in there, the 30 game barg pack. They're all old, but some are quite gnarly.	Not Reviewed	▼	7

THE BUDGETS

1	**Batman – Movie** *Hit Squad*	■	1
2	**Moonwalker** *Kixx*	▲	3
3	**Turrican** *Kixx*	▼	2
4	**Chase HQ** *Hit Squad*	▲	–
5	**Seymour Goes...** *Codemasters*	▲	–
6	**Quattro Fantastic** *Codemasters*	▲	–
7	**Op Thunderbolt** *Hit Squad*	▲	–
8	**Slightly Magic** *Codemasters*	▲	–
9	**Quattro Coin-Ops** *Codemasters*	▼	5
10	**N Zealand Story** *Hit Squad*	▼	4



● Blimey, our youngest Readers' Chart person ever (i.e. younger than last month's). Laura Burke from Peterborough is a mere six years of age. Her brother Simon (who writes to *Reaction* a lot) sent in charts for both himself and Laura. We decided to use Laura's because Simon is wearing a frightening pair of shorts (and not a lot else) in his piccie. And Laura has the good taste to include *Edd the Duck* in her chart. Hurrah! Send your top fives and snapshots to *Readers' Charts, Amstrad Action, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW.*

READERS' CHARTS

1. **TEENAGE MUTANT HERO TURTLES** *Mirrorsoft*
2. **EDD THE DUCK** *Impulze*
3. **TERMINATOR 2** *Ocean*
4. **BALLDOZER** *AA Covertape*
5. **PICTIONARY** *Domark*

ON THE GR

STOP PRESS

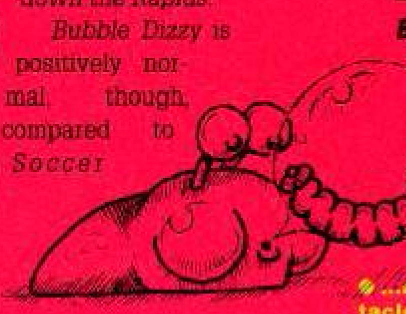
The Codies are going berserk! There's going to be a new stand-alone *Dizzy* game, for a start, where Dizzy is made to walk the plank and then has to work his way up from the bottom of the sea... *Bubble Dizzy* was actually one of the games pencilled in for *Dizzy's Excellent Adventures*, but lost out to *Dizzy down the Rapids*. *Bubble Dizzy* is positively normal, though, compared to *Soccer Pinball*. This one is a sort of cross between pinball and football, apparently. Er, fine. And weirdest of all is a new Codies character, Steg. Steg is a slug. He's slimy, slippery and – apparently – cute. He (er, *it*?) has a nest full of baby Stegs, and he has to keep as many of them alive as possible in a kind of cross between *Lemmings* and *Dizzy*. We wait with bated breath...



● This is Steg. He's a slug. Which is a terrestrial snail with an elongate body...



● ...and usually a small external shell, or no shell at all...





● ...and two pairs of tentacles on its head, the upper pair being eyes.

***Bubble Dizzy* will be out in January, with *Soccer Pinball* and *Steg* following pretty soon afterwards, all three at £3.99.**

SWITCHBLADE ON BUDGET

Switchblade was one of the games of 1991 that we liked. A lot. Well now it's coming out on budget, on Gremlin's GBH label. If you haven't already got this game, *buy it!*

***Switchblade* will be out in December, price £3.99.**



● *Switchblade* is one of the gnarliest games of the year. And now you can own it for the price of a souvenir tea towel. Budgetastic!

5 Cheetah Bugs and 10 T-shirts to be won!

The Cheetah Bug is just about the best joystick we've had in the *Amstrad Action* office for ages! It fits your hand superbly, the Fire buttons are in exactly the right place, and the stick movement itself is delightfully light. Wunderbar!

The biggest test was *Smash TV*. This game requires ultra-rapid fire, ultra-rapid movement and the ability to hit those diagonals straight away. Nothing else came close to the Bug.

Mind you, the 'stick might be a tad light for those lumbering strategy epics that some of you lot out there go in for, but for arcade junkies, we reckon it's unbeatable. And that's official!

Anyway, the point is that we are giving away no fewer than 5 of these wee beasties, with 10 T-shirts on offer for runners-up. As usual, we've got a series of little questions for you, and as usual we want you to send your answers in on a postcard (the back of an envelope will do).

1. Why is this Cheetah 'stick called 'The Bug'?

(a) Because it looks like one?
(b) Because it squashes like one?
(c) Or because it crawls up people's trouser legs and bites them in the... (*that's enough of that – ed*)

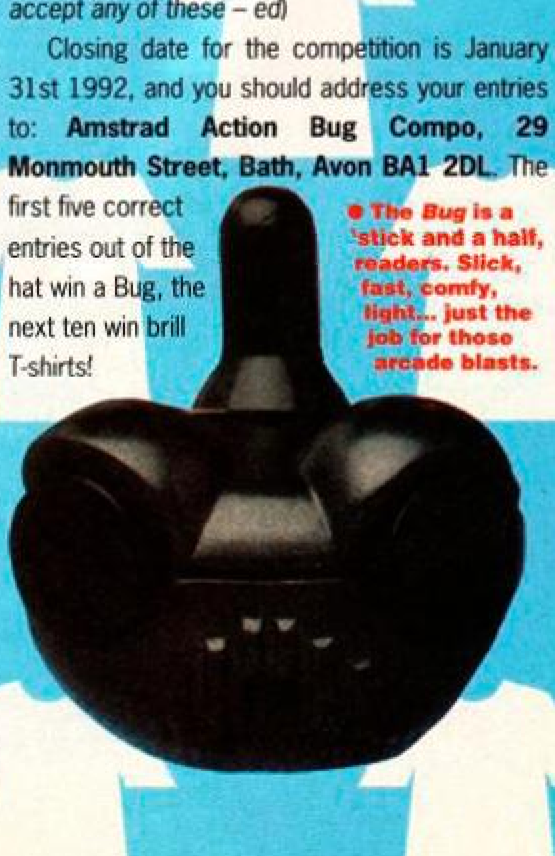
2. If the 'stick looks like a bug, what do the Fire buttons represent?

(a) Its eyes?
(b) Its carapace (*huh?*)
(c) Its... (*that's enough of that too – ed*)

3. Where would you expect to find a bug?

(a) Under a paving slab?
(b) In a program?
(c) Down at your local computer shop (*er, we'll accept any of these – ed*)

Closing date for the competition is January 31st 1992, and you should address your entries to: **Amstrad Action Bug Compo, 29 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2DL.** The first five correct entries out of the hat win a Bug, the next ten win brill T-shirts!



● The *Bug* is a 'stick and a half, readers. Slick, fast, comfy, light... just the job for those arcade blasts.

RAPEVINE...

YOU MUST BE JOKING!

Oh, er... well, yes... how does this work then? There's no doubt about it – the new Ktron Stealth games controller is, er, different. It's 'ergonomically designed to fit your grip', it has 'long-term play comfort', it has a 'faster, more responsive feel', a six-foot cable, 'multi-directional control' (don't they all?), 'custom-made microswitches' and is 'guaranteed for 5 million operations'. Phew! You're still going to have to turn it over for a few minutes to work out what you do, though...



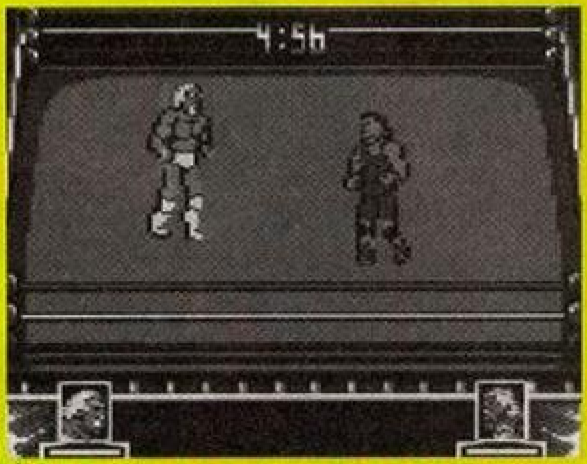
● The *Stealth* is as easy to use as an ordinary joystick (when operated with your nose). Makes games more of a challenge, though!

Basically, you squeeze the two halves together or pull them apart to move up and down, and twist the handgrips up or down for left and right. The Fire buttons are mounted on the underneath of the handgrips.

Well we don't like it (sorry, Ktron!). The control is heavy, hard to get used to (though we suppose you would eventually) and the Fire buttons are heavy and 'clicky'. If you've got maulers like a Liverpudlian brickie, go ahead. Otherwise, leave well alone...

The Stealth game controller should be in the shops now, price £TBA.

WWF KNOCKS 'EM OUT!



● *WWF Wrestling* looks like being the next big craze, so the game should be a biggie whatever it's like. It looks pretty darned good though.

We've managed to prise a sneak preview of *WWF* out of Ocean, and it looks excellent. The controls are pretty simple – you just hit Fire to punch and kick, and waggle like a madman to wrestle your opponent to the floor. You can play a variety of 'good guys' and there's a simultaneous two-player mode for about ten times the fun.

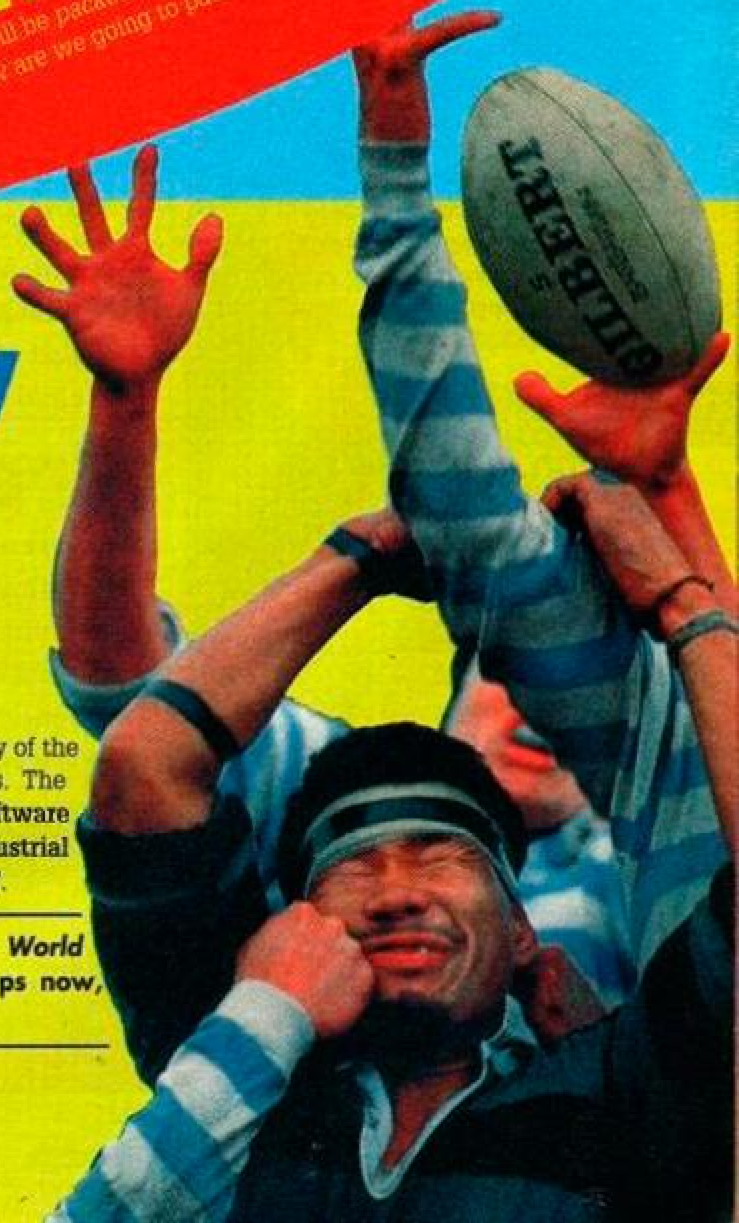
We should be getting our review copy any day now. Seconds out...!

***WWF* will be out in December, price £10.99 cass, £15.99 disk.**

NEXT MONTH...

...the Action Test section will be packed with games as we round up all the Chrimbo compilations. How are we going to pack it all in? If only we knew...

WORLD CLASS RUGBY NOW WORKS ON THE PLUS!



Audiogenic's *World Class Rugby* is brill. In fact it's so brill that we gave it a Rave last issue. Unfortunately, the tape version we were sent wouldn't work on the Plus!

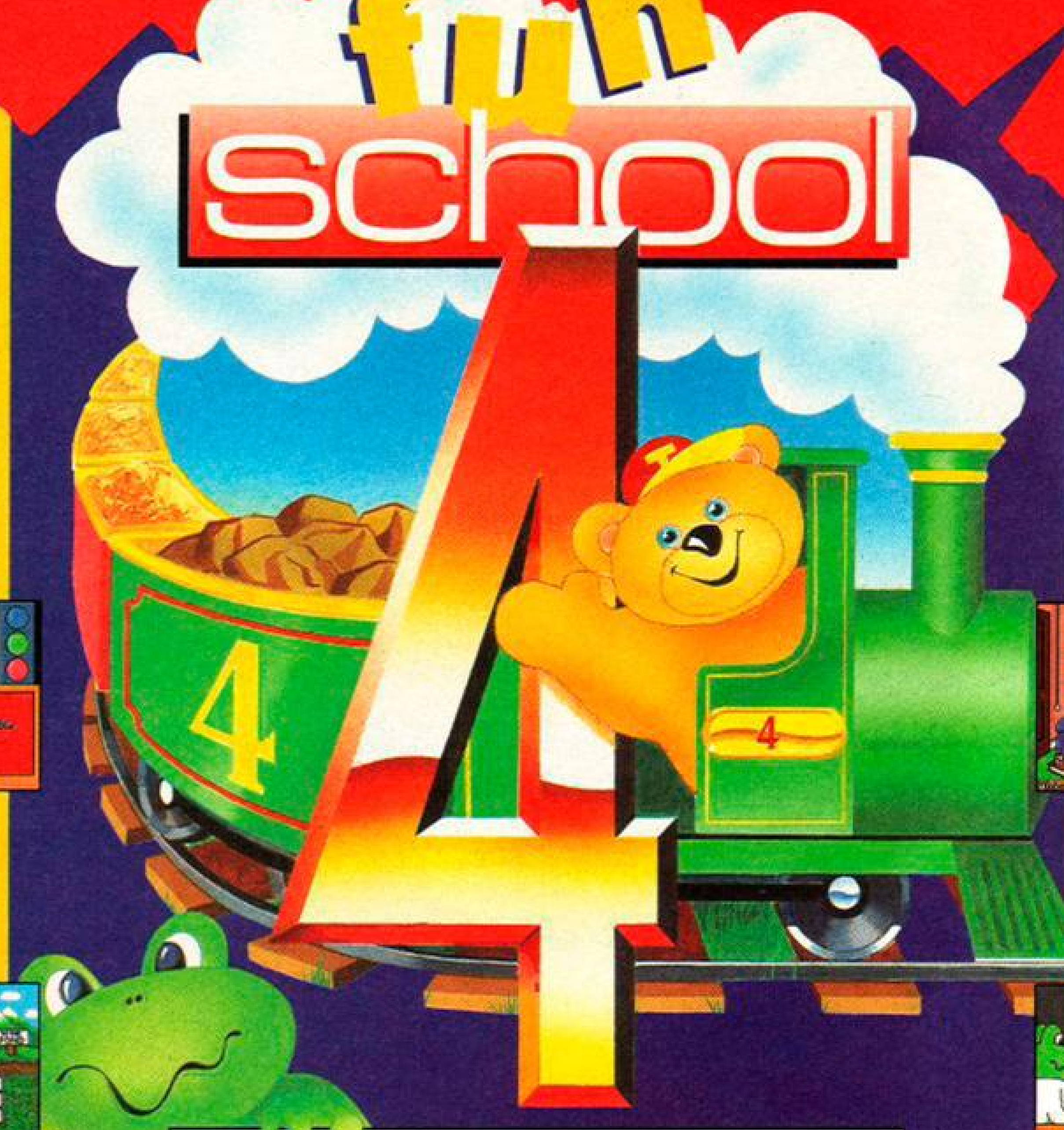
HOWEVER. Audiogenic has since been in touch, explaining that from now on, all versions will be fully Plus-compatible. Hurrah!

We rang Will Carling to find out his views on Plus owners now being able to sample the scrumming and tackling action of *WCR*. But he'd gone shopping.

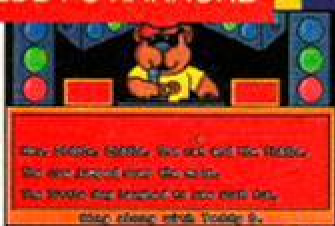
Audiogenic will happily replace any of the copies so far bought by Plus owners. The address to write to is: **Audiogenic Software Limited, Unit 27, Christchurch Industrial Centre, Wealdstone, Harrow HA3 8NT.**

Fully Plus-compatible versions of *World Class Rugby* should be in the shops now, price £10.99 cass, £15.99 disk.

Help your child to a brighter future – with the best in educational software

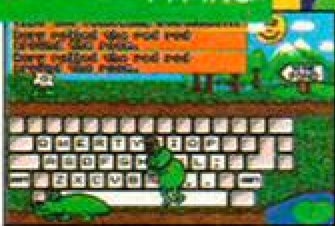


TEDDY'S KARAOKE



Sing along with DJ Ted to popular nursery rhymes.

TYPING



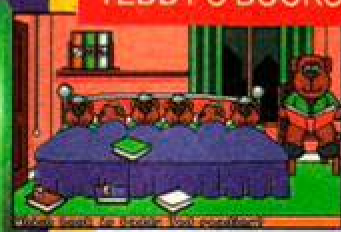
Type the correct letters and words and save Freddy from the crocodile.

DESERT DATES



Study historical events to find the secrets of the pyramids.

TEDDY'S BOOKS



Select the correct number of Teddy's bedtime book.

SHOP KEEPER



Shop with Freddy and his friends choosing coins to pay the bill.

EXCHANGE RATES



Change Sammy's money at the international exchange desk.

"Fun School 4 zooms to the top of the class. Three brand new packages combining the essentials of the National Curriculum with beautiful graphics, cleverly animated rewards and stimulating sound keep your children engrossed while they learn.

Teddy for **under fives,** Freddy the Frog for **five to seven year olds** and Sammy the Spy for **seven to eleven year olds** provide **SIX** original stimulating programs in every pack. Plus, the carefully designed levels for each program encourage your children to have fun and learn at their own pace – and ensure they get the most from Fun School 4 and keep coming back for more."

FORMAT	Amiga	ST	PC	C64		Spectrum		CPC	
				Tape	Disc	Tape	Disc	Tape	Disc
PRICE £	24.99	24.99	24.99	12.99	16.99	12.99	16.99	12.99	16.99

Archimedes and PCW versions will follow in early 1992.
Spectrum, C64 & CPC available early November.
Amiga ST & PC available end of October.

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Reaction



Christmas – what a jape, eh? Grown-ups consume loads of alcohol, then start giggling mindlessly at anything anyone says, and us kids get loads of beaut pressies (and some rubbish ones, like jumpers and dictionaries). It's a time of great merriment for one and all.

Speaking of merriment, welcome to this month's *Reaction*, the all-action, all-entertainment *AA* letters page edited by ADAM PETERS. Remember to send your techie questions and advice to *Forum* or *Ask Alex*, your requests for cheats to *Cheat Mode*, and your long tirades of abuse to the *Radio Times*.

The best letters get £25 mail order vouchers, and the angriest get badges or (new this month) satsumas. Write to *Reaction, Amstrad Action, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW.*

All right, let's wolf down the rest of this festive nut roast and see what you lot are spouting about this month...

VOUCHER £25

A loonie writes...

I think *AA* is fab, but I have nothing to do at the moment, so I have decided to complain about some things that are nothing to do with you.

1) First of all, why haven't I got much money at the moment? I think that on the front of next month's issue you should have a free fiver.

2) Why do you have to make the cover tapes so addictive? I can spend hours playing on them, and then forget to do my homework. Please do something about this.

3) Learn to count. There are eight games in the *Capcom Collection*, not four as you said in issue 74 page 18. If you cannot handle the sum 1+1+1+1+1+1+1+1 then I suggest a course in advanced mathematics.

4) I returned a cover tape from issue 73, and I still have not had a chance to stick it up my sister's nose.

5) My private life is going nowhere. Can I please mention Jayne, who heartlessly refuses to be more than just 'friends' (sob). Please do something about this, I expect it from my £2.50.

6) Why is Jayne's boyfriend still around? Please rectify it. If you do this, then I will be able to concentrate on my work, and get a good job, like running Future Publishing, and I will give all staff a 300% pay rise. *(Blimey, £4.50 a week!)*

So, for good value I suggest you give me money, put terrible cover tapes on the cover, learn to count, give back my cover tape, sort out my private life, and print this letter. Keep up the good work.

Ian Evans
Wimborne, Dorset



● AA Cover tapes are too good, reckons Ian Evans. "Make them worse," he pleads.

Adam: ***You're a bit of a sad young lad, really, aren't you, Ian? Ever thought of taking up a hobby? Stamp collecting for instance, or painting the shells of tortoises? Never mind, we've got an AA73 covertape in the office we can send you...***

Er, wrong computer

Can you recommend an external 3.5-inch disk drive that is compatible with the 6128, so that I can make use of the programs I have saved on my IBM (sorry, rude word!) at work?

Alternatively, I would like to obtain *Lotus* and *Freelance* but I haven't seen it advertised for the 6128. Can you advise? Thanks for your help – keep up the good work.

Jim Smith
Worthing

Adam: ***Cor, that's creepy. Your letter ended with exactly the same five words as the preceding one. We recommend the Siren Bargain Pack we reviewed last month, as far as 3.5-inch drives go. But, er, the Amstrad CPC range isn't IBM compatible, so you won't be able to use any of the programs on your machine at work. Likewise, Lotus and Freelance are PC packages, and therefore not available for the 464 or 6128. And if you think that letter is puzzling, readers, take a look at this one...***

It's that man again

So it's nearly Christmas and what games have we got to look forward to? *Turtles, Terminator 2, Hudson Hawk* – movie licences the lot of them.

What is the point of film licences, and why do big software companies insist on producing so many of them? Perhaps they're too stupid to think up their own ideas for games, and have to rely on ready made plots.

The whole thing seems quite unnecessary. So many brilliant films produce crap games (and vice versa, though I can't think of any). Software houses are conning the public, relying on the movie industry rather than their own programmers for their income.

They push half-baked multi-load trash on us, which we eagerly snap up because we liked the film. It's completely disgusting. Ocean, US Gold and Mirrorsoft (the three prime offenders) should be ashamed of themselves. They are conning the games buying public.

Let's all boycott the licences, then maybe the programmers will have to start coming up with some ideas of their own, and we'll get some better games to play.

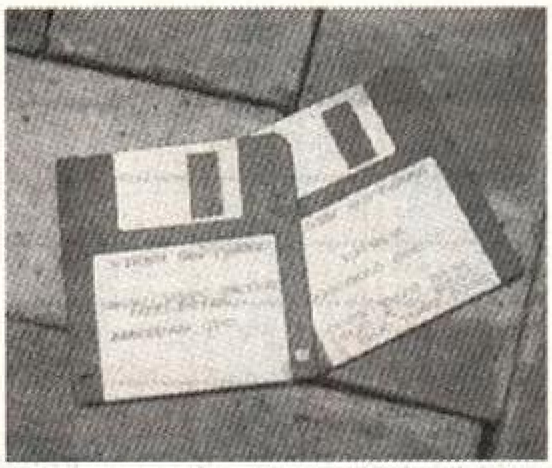
Peter Worley
Ilford

Adam: ***Phew, maybe we've found the new Emma Broadley here! Fancy a column, Pete?***

Er, wrong magazine

I purchased a copy of your magazine which contained a free games tape. Inside the magazine was an article which stated that owners of disk-run computers could have the games put on disk by sending £2 to Ablex Audio Video.

I duly sent the £2 and a disk was returned. However, the disk was too narrow for our disk drive which is 3.5-inch (the disk was 3.125-inch) and we therefore could not run it. I returned it to Ablex asking for it to be put on a 3.5-inch disk, but they returned it in the smaller size saying this is the only size they do.



● **Disk versions of our cover tape don't come in 3.5-inch format, fumes Jeremy Milne. Why? Er, because CPCs have 3-inch drives, Jez.**

I feel you should have mentioned in the article that the disk did not come in 3.5-inch size and I would not have then sent for it. As it is I have wasted £2 on a disk I cannot use. I think it is very misleading to just state that the games can be supplied on disk for £2, thereby implying that anyone can have them on disk at this price, which is not true since you can only have them if you have a narrow 3.125-inch disk drive. This should have been stated so that readers with larger disk drives did not waste their money sending for the disk.

Perhaps you would bear the larger disk drive users in mind when making future offers of this sort.

J A Milne
Newark, Notts

Adam: *Er, don't take offence at this, Jeremy, but what computer have you actually got? Amstrad Action is a magazine for the CPC/Plus range of Amstrad computers (464, 664, 6128). All disk-based CPCs use 3-inch disks. Though 3.5-inch drives can be bought for them, these can only be used as second drives, so every CPC disk-user will have a 3-inch drive. You haven't, therefore you haven't got a CPC, therefore you should be buying a magazine called PC Format.*

I'll probably knock a few thousand off our circulation by revealing this, but if it says PC1512, PC1640, PC2086, PCW8256 or PCW8512 on your machine, I'm afraid you're buying the wrong magazine (whoops).

Let's get 'im!

I am writing this letter in response to Mr D Shearer's letter in *AA74*. His review of *Amstrad Action* is full of ****. He must have eyes growing out of his **** if he thinks the reviews are ****. The reviews are written in a comedy style manner, which makes them more interesting to read.

I bet his idea of a good review is sitting down and reading the ****** instructions to the game.

As for the cover tape, you *****, you cannot expect *AA* to give away £10 games just because you're so tight you don't want to spend more than £2.50.

If you think £2.50 is bad to pay for a covertape of free games, which they don't have to give away, what the **** are you doing buying a computer for which the games cost £30 each?

Chris Clarry
Liverpool

Adam: *This is just one of the dozens of letters that came flooding in, from all corners of Britain, after our call to arms in the "Let's Duff Up D Shearer" campaign. We're getting together some baseball bats and organising a coach to pick everyone up... (Stop lurching around, Adam, you're loosening those straps – ed.)*

A brilliant idea

Please, please, please, will you put five demos and five complete games on the Christmas covertape. Here are some of my ideas; *Final Fight* demo, *Terminator 2* demo, *Prince of Persia* demo, *Shadow of the Beast* demo, *WWF Wrestling* demo (if possible), *Seymour goes to Hollywood* complete game, *Thunderbirds* complete game, *Epyx Championship Wrestling* complete game, *Continental Circus* complete game, *Bloodwych* complete game. Please make this covertape as a lot of readers would agree with me.

Andrew Murphy
Stockport

Adam: *Er, Amstrad Action isn't the computer industry, Andrew. We don't program or market the games, we just write about them. Demos are provided by software houses. Many softies don't go in for demos at all (including the producers of some of the games you've listed). The full games are old stuff that we are given by softies, or buy for a small amount from the coder/copyright holder. We're only really allowed two full games on each tape (the result of an informal meeting between representatives of the games industry and members of the computer press). Even if we could get hold of the games you've listed, it would cost a bomb. End result: We'd have to charge at least £30 for the issue! Sorry, Andy, it just ain't possible.*

Slagging letter

I have been a reader of *Amstrad Action* for nearly two years now, and recently I have been disappointed to see words like CR*P and SLA**ING cropping up in reviews and this section. Please can you tell me if your editor is ill-mannered, or just thick in the head, because if you ask me you should fire him.

David Watkins
Cardiff

Adam: *Yeah, Rod's a right nasty piece of work, swearing and cussing all day long. I just cover my ears and hope he shuts... er, stops being so bally rude. I'd like to say I understood your point of view Dave, but unfortunately I think you're talking crap. Which do you reckon is more ill-mannered, readers, using the word 'slagging' or calling someone 'thick in the head'? Get a life, David.*

CPCs are crap! (Selected highlights)



What is the difference between an Amstrad computer owner and a train spotter? Yes, absolutely zilch! They both are waiting for something that is either too late in arrival, broke or out of date.

Believe me, the machine is ready for the *Antiques Roadshow*. Just look at the overall grafix and detail of most of the games provided for your heirloom relic, ha ha pathetic!

You can get better grafix and sprites by putting a Doc Marten boot on top of three felt tip pens. And take a look at the expansion port, printer port, etc, you find more robust things in a *Kinder Egg* or *Corn Flakes* packet. As for the printers of the same company, faster results can be obtained by teaching a Serbo-Croat English and then giving him a 1932 *Underwood Portable* typewriter.

Your magazine, with its 67 recycled pages, should be supplied on a small cardboard roll, so it can easily be used for what it is good for (hence without staples).

I include your latest cover tape, the usual, it is penetrated so knit yourself a cardigan with it. Have some guts and print this jewel. If not, do not worry – somebody will.

D Ching
Newcastle-upon-Tyne

Adam: *You know how it is, readers. You oversleep, trip and sprain your ankle running into work, spill coffee over your computer, lose your best baseball cap... And then open up a letter that shows there's other people with far worse problems than you.*

BYTE SIZE

William Morris (1834-1896)

British artist, craftsman, writer, social reformer and printer. After attending Oxford University he came into contact with the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood and began to write poetry and to paint. Both of these activities reflected his love of the Middle Ages, and in 1861 he founded a firm of decorators and designers.

Peter Lindley
London

Adam: *Er, what's this got to do with the CPC? Either you've been out in the sun too long, or you wrote a letter on the back of some history notes and we looked at the wrong side. Who knows?*

Well done Ocean?

I have just completed *Robocop 2* on cartridge with a total score of 8,217,050. At the end it shows a picture and a message reads "Robocop 2 is defeated". I would just like to say what a good game it is and well done to Ocean and its programmers.

Graham Miles
York

Adam: *You don't really want to say that at all, do you Graham? You just want to boast about your score. We're not daft, you know (well, not that daft).*

A modest request

My name is Ramesh Kumar. I am doing a newspaper and in charge of the 'Computer Corner'. I will be very grateful if you could send me some posters (no bigger than A4 size), eg *Dragon Ninja, Red Heat, Robocop 1 & 2, Cobra*, etc. Please could send me the Cheat Mode books 1 & 2. Please could you send me back issues for my display.

Ramesh Kumar
London

Adam: *What a brilliant ruse, everyone should try it! We admire your front. Incidentally, I'm starting a magazine about furniture. Please send me your settee.*

Stuck for words

I am the owner of a CPC 464 and I have a friend called David Gibb. He says that Amstrads are crap. Please could you tell me what to say to him?

Stephen Fraser
Dunfermline, Scotland

Adam: *Try "Bog off you little toad, before I shove a pencil up your nose."*

Cheap consoles continued...

I have spotted the console being flogged off for £9.95 in Blackpool (it was a little shop, not one of the electrical chains, so I can't remember its name), and for £6.00 at Cowed Mawhr market.

Tony Hutchison
Saltney, Cheshire

Adam: *Remember readers, there's a prize for the person who spots the GX4000 being sold cheapest. Seen 'em being whacked out for less than six quid? Write to Cheap Consoles at the usual address.*

Joanne Brown and her horse Silver in *"The Christmas Adventure"*

by Dinsdale Porridge (Chewton Mendip *Writer of the Year* 1934)



Hello, my name's Joanne Brown, and I've got a bit of a fertile imagination.

I usually spend Christmas with my friend Charlotte and her family at their pig farm in Somerset. This year, though, dad decided I should spend the holiday period with my strange Uncle Angus. Of course, my horse Silver and my beloved CPC went along with me. (Which made things rather crowded, as Uncle Angus lives in a very small shed in Peckham.)

The holiday started off quite well. I taught Angus how to play *Chip's Challenge*, and he showed me some of his Satanic artefacts. Silver seemed to get on really well with Uncle Angus' cat Lucifer, though she did eat it at one point. (Angus didn't say anything, but I don't think he was too happy about that.)

It was shaping up to be a wonderful holiday. Then, a couple of days before Christmas, something very odd happened. Uncle Angus disappeared. He said he was just popping out to look for a '76 Cavalier, and when he didn't return we started to worry. Silver was up all night chewing her hooves and peering out of the window.

In the morning we raced down to the local police station and told Sergeant Whiplash what had happened. "Oh don't worry," said the Sergeant, grinning inanely, "I'm sure the old duffer will turn up. We're all of Christmas shopping. If he isn't back by the New Year, let us know and we might do something to look for him."

I rushed out angrily, Silver leaving a 'little present' on the cop shop floor for the uninterested officers. We would have to find Uncle Angus ourselves. It was time to put the *Dizzy* tapes to one side, and get serious. Silver drew a picture of Uncle Angus on *Smart 2* and, borrowing a friend's printer, we printed it out and wandered the streets of South East London asking people if they'd seen him.

After a day's searching we had got nowhere, and were about to give up and go home, when we met a man called Gary in a pub, and he told us that Uncle Angus had been kidnapped by aliens and had been locked in a laser web on the spaceship Nekenieh. We rushed as fast as we could round to the home of senile scientist Frank Wobble-bottom.

Frank was straight into action, rewiring the CPC to turn it into a space-bike. Silver, Frank and I leapt on and were soon scouring the cosmos for the Nekenieh. But, though we searched every galaxy we could find, and met lots of strange alien races, of the Nekenieh we could find no trace.

We returned home, desolate. We would never see Uncle Angus again. Imagine our surprise when we met him on our walk back from Wobble-bottom's house. "We thought you'd been kidnapped by aliens," we cried.

"Nah, I just've forgotten where I live," he said. Oh how we laughed!

For Christmas I got a new Konix *Speedking* joystick. We had a slap-up Chrimbo lunch, and then I gave Silver a game of *International 3D Tennis*, while Angus went off to the basement to see how his turnips were gestating. What a Christmas!

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● Crisp characters in NLQ mode. 120dpi resolution at 50cps.

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● Readable output in Draft mode. 60dpi resolution at 250 cps.

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● Dotty but fast in High Speed mode. 50dpi resolution at 300cps.

SAMSUNG SP09330N

£222 ● Samsung ● 081 397 9949

Samsung are well known for producing TVs and microwaves for the lower end of the market. Now the company's produced a 9-pin printer. It's cheap, that's for sure, but is it any good? ADAM WARING checks it out...

The SP-09930N may not be the cleverest name in the world. But it's the name for a 'very clever indeed' type of printer. It's a 9-pin, but has some features, and certainly the speed, that put some of its 24-bit big brothers to shame.

The most noticeable thing when you switch it on for the first time is the jingle! A simple 'beep' isn't good enough for the Samsung, oh no. Instead, it plays a rather tinny tune, somewhat like one of those digital watches or musical door-bells. This may be quite a novelty at first. But soon, very soon, becomes a source of irritation.

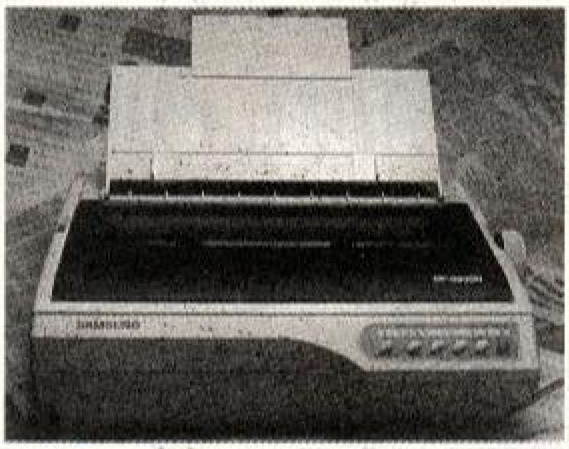
The printer can handle both single sheets and continuous paper. It has a push-feed tractor mechanism; the mechanism is hidden away at the back, and so doesn't have to be removed every time you want to change the type of paper you're using. Actually, it's even a lot more clever than that. It has auto paper parking, which means that with a press of a button the tractor feed will actually pull the paper backwards through the printer 'til it's safely out of the way (but still connected to the feed mechanism). Now you can run off a few letters to your bank manager on your posh headed paper and, once that's finished, a touch of a button will bring the continuous paper back in line. This cuts out lots of hassle and you don't destroy more trees than you have to through wasted sheets of paper. Clever, eh?

The same mechanics allow another neat feature to be incorporated. The printer has 'drop-in loading' for single sheets. So instead of all that fiddly lining up and scrolling the paper to the right position with the platen knob, you simply drop it in place between the paper guides. It's automatically scrolled to the right place, perfectly lined up and ready to start printing.

But the area that this printer really excels in is speed. It can churn out pages very quickly indeed, an astonishing 300 characters a second is its claimed top speed. This is quicker than any other 9-pins we know of, and can beat a good many 24-pins hands down.

TECH SPECS

Number of fonts	2
Number of pins	9
Draft Speed	250 cps
LQ Speed	50 cps
Resolution	120dpi
Interface	parallel
Tractor type	Rear push feed
Auto paper park	Yes
Buffer size	3K



● The Samsung SP09930N is cheap, and it's also very, very fast.

It's not a bad looking machine, either. With its rounded edges it looks like something out of a '70s sci-fi movie. The buttons on the front panel are raised plastic ovals. They're a bit tacky looking – the pressure pad buttons found on most printers are better and feel more positive. But that's just an opinion. Who knows, in a years' time we may all be wearing them.

The printer has a 3K input buffer. Good, but not that good. The disadvantage with small buffers is that the computer is constantly interupted by the printer for more data, whereas bigger buffers take more information and so you can get on with your computing while the printer gets on with the printing. This printer's memory can be easily expanded, though. An 8K RAM chip can be installed by plugging a chip into an empty socket, providing 11K total memory.

Two fonts are provided and depend on the emulation mode used – there's a choice of IBM Proprinter or Epson. The IBM mode is more versatile – and the high speed mode is only available with this. The Epson mode has prettier characters, though, with a nice serif font (i.e. with jaggy bits on the edges of letters).

You get an awful lot of printer for your money with the Samsung. It's packed full of clever tricks and prints at a speed that leaves others standing. The main drawbacks are the lack of control over font selection and small buffer, but the printing noise and those silly beeps may get on your nerves too. For those who have lots of output and need it fast, though, this printer is perfect. **AA**

THE NEED FOR SPEED

One of the the Samsung's biggest selling points is speed. In NLQ mode it turns pages out at a very respectable 50 cps – not bad for a 9-pin. Switch to draft mode and it churns out print at a pretty nifty 250 cps – faster than many 24-pins. But there's more – switch to 'high speed draft' mode and the paper flies out the top of the printer at a breakneck 300 cps. Of course, there is a drawback in terms of quality. NLQ mode prints with a 120dpi resolution. It's halved to 60dpi in draft mode, and drops to 50dpi in the high speed mode.

GOOD NEWS

- Advanced features for the price
- Faster than a very fast thing!

BAD NEWS

- Limited fonts
- 'Jingles' become irritating...

Verdict 88%


5
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CARTOON COLLECTION
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CJ'S ELEPHANT ANTICS 94% ZZap Silver Medal
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MEGAGAME
SEYMOUR goes to HOLLYWOOD
"A Crash Smash 90%" The game that launched your favourite mega star.
"A glorious bounce around platform game packed with colour and playability" ZZAP
"Graphics and presentation are excellent and all in all Slightly Magic is absolutely magic." YOUR SINCLAIR
"Extremely accessible, refreshingly original in ideas and great staying power." ZZAP
"Seymour is completely brilliant. It's packed with great graphics, it's got a kickin' sound track and it's very, very playable." YOUR SINCLAIR
* Note Amstrad users have Little Puff substituted for CJ'S Elephant Antics.
CODEMASTERS
AMIGA screen shots shown.
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ATARI ST AND AMIGA
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ROCKSTAR 0898 555 090
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If you can't get any further in any of these games and would like us to give hints & tips on how to solve all the puzzles just phone the numbers below. Please don't phone unless you are really stuck and make sure you get permission from the person who pays the phone bill first! Calls costs 36p per minute during off peak time and 48p per minute at all other times. (GREAT BRITAIN ONLY)
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SPIKE IN TRANSYLVANIA 0898 555 105

THE AA CHRISTMAS PANTO





A cast of thousands (well, half a dozen), a budget of millions (er, £50) and spectacular locations (um, Bath council offices) are the ingredients for this seasonal spectacular from *Amstrad Action*. Relive the magic of one of pantomime's favourite stories, cheer the villains, boo the, er, goodies... and get out your hankies for one of the saddest productions ever seen... (we mean that)

It was just another day at *AA* Towers. Young Cinderella Booth was hard at work, sorting out games in the cellar, whilst her cruel step-family looked on. "Ere," screeched step-mother Ermintrude, "get a move on Cinders, you can lick the dirt off the floor afterwards."

"Oh," sobbed Cinders, "you're always so horrible to me."

"We're not horrible," shouted step-sister Hattersley, picking her nose with the end of a pen, "we've given you a roof over your head and a job to do. You should be grateful, you good-for-nothing old plop-face. Ha ha ha. Where are the buns?"

"Yeah, get a move on you lazy devil," screeched Gemima, Cinders' other step-sister, as she thwacked Cinders round the head with a baseball bat. "Once you've finished tidying the cellar, you can wash our clothes, and then clean out the attic with a toothbrush."



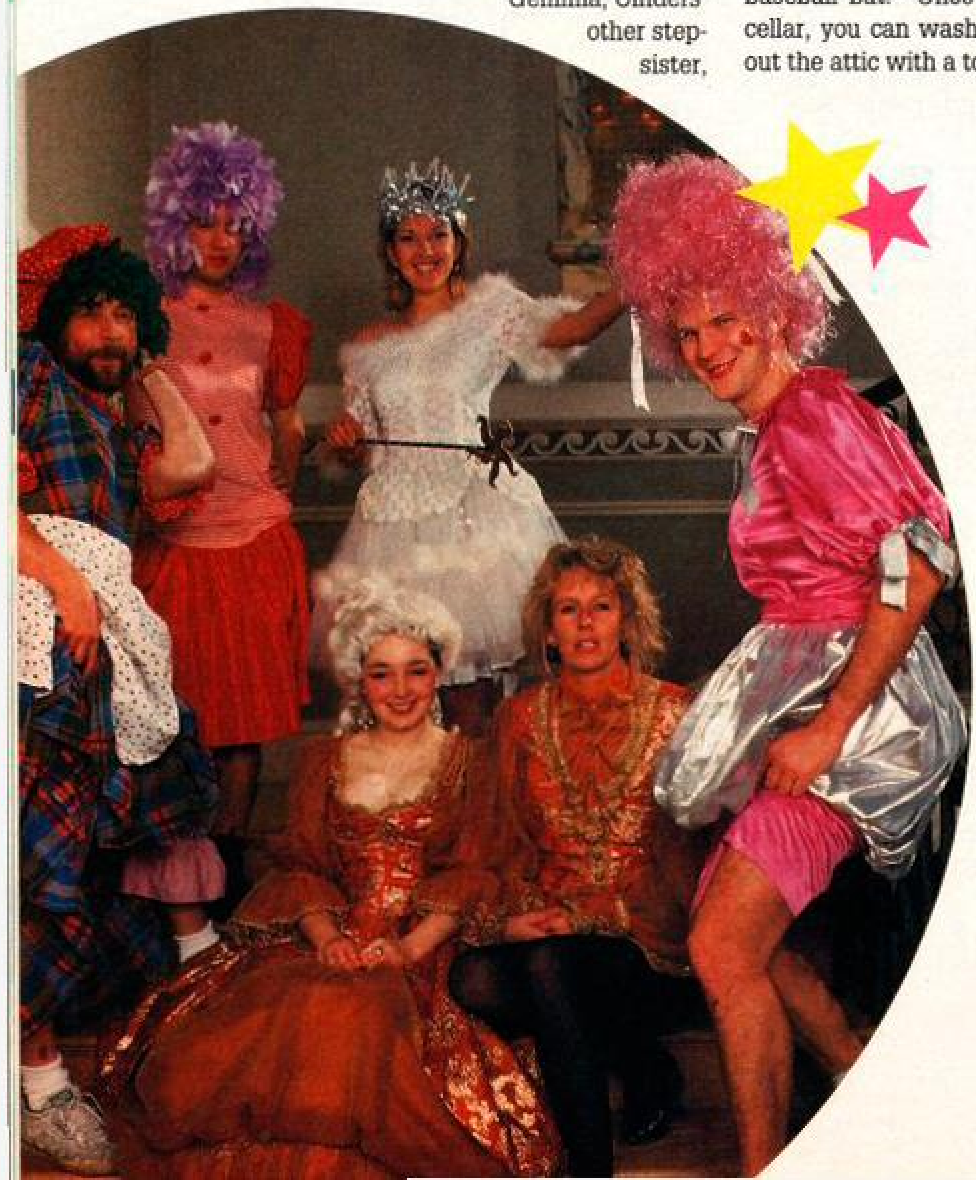
● Poor old Cinders, eh? Forced to tidy the AA cellar and wear charcoal on her face. If only there was a woman waving a shuriken-on-a-stick here, she wishes to herself. Suddenly...

"Yeah, 'cos we need clean clothes for the Ball tonight. We're going to get off with Prince Charming, and become princesses" added Hattersley, gratuitously. Cinderella started to cry.

Three hours of dress-cleaning, floor-scrubbing and driving lesson gags later, and the uglies leave for the Ball. "And don't forget, we expect you to have redecorated the office and built a new joystick splitter by the time we get back," shouted Ermintrude.

The door slammed shut. Cinderella sat down on the floor and started to cry (again). "Oh it's not fair," she babbled, "I want to go to the Ball and fall in love with the Prince. My step-family are all so horrible to me. Boo hoo."

Suddenly there was a flash of light, and a 22-year old woman in a fairy costume appeared. Cinderella, having been warned about people like



Amstrad Action p



Maryanne Booth (Art Assist.) as CINDERELLA

Mazza was the obvious choice for downtrodden and tormented chicklet Cinders. Barely a second goes by in the *AA* office without some cruel jibe about her driving or the daft things she says. What's her response? "I think they should all just grow up". Brrrr, that told us.



Jane Richardson (Publisher) as PRINCE CHARMING

Don't let that 'whoops-I've-just-put-a-wet-hand-in-a-plug-socket' hairdo fool you, Jane's a dead important person who we can't say anything nasty about or we get sacked. So, er, nice weather eh? And don't you reckon there's a lot of good stuff on the telly nowadays?



• Good old *Cinderella*, eh, readers? It's a decent, wholesome family show, featuring a beautiful and pure romance. A romance between a Prince in a leather mini-skirt, and a young girl whose family consists entirely of men in dresses. Er...

that, ran off and hid. "Cinderella!" called the fairy.

"Go away, you're weird!" shouted Cinders from behind a pile of boxes.

"But I'm your fairy godmother," protested the fairy godmother.

"Oh yeah, a likely story," shouted Cinders, shivering a little.

"No it's true," insisted the fairy, "look!" All of a sudden there was a green flash and all the games sorted themselves into the right boxes by themselves.

"Cor," said Cinders, coming out into the open, "you are my fairy godmother after all."

"Indeed I am. And you, Cinders, *shall* go to the ball." The fairy waved her wand over Cinderella's head and began reciting a chant in latin...

Meanwhile at the ballroom, the sisters were trying to attract the attention of the Prince.

"Yo! Oi, Princey, over here! Woooo!" shouted Gemima.

"Get a load of these!" shouted Hattersley, waving bits of her body.

But the Prince ignored the two nerds and their strange bearded mother, choosing instead to talk to a swiss cheese plant in the corner. Suddenly the room went quiet and everyone looked towards the dead fit and lush young chicklet who had just wandered in.



• Rod: "Gotcha! All right, you two reprobates..." *Adam W: "Eek. Help, somebody, help!"* Adam P: "Erk, what are you doing Rod?" *Rod: "Shut up and look at the camera."* Adam P: "You forgot to take your medication today, huh?" *Adam W: "Oh dear."*



• "It's all right officer, we can explain everything. Erm, the earth was created by God, corn circles are caused by rabbits, UFOs are hats thrown out of planes... What are we up to? Oh, this is just a bit of fun." *(Hang on, you said this was a vital part of the plot – ed.)* Ah.

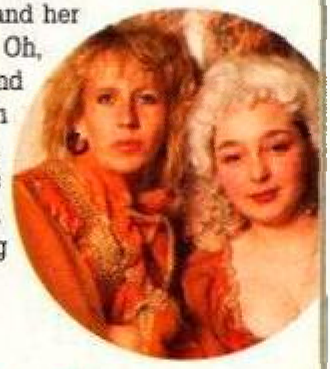
"Cor," said the Prince to the mysterious chicklet, "fancy a dance?"

"All right," said Cinders (for 'twas she). They danced, started snogging, and pretty soon had fallen head over heels in love (aw).

But that was all ten years ago. Today, Cinderella and the Prince are King and Queen, living in a big house and paying no taxes, with a couple of lovely kiddies and a Range Rover.

But what about Ermintrude and her daughters? Where are they? Oh, there they are, wandering round *AA* Towers, emaciated with hunger. "Cinders, where are you, you miserable little toad. It's time for our supper. Just you wait till we catch you, young madam..." they wail.

And it's all true.



...esents its glittering galaxy of stars...



Cheryl Beesley (Ad Manager) as THE FAIRY GODMOTHER

Chez originally wanted to be Prince Charming (but no-one argues with the boss). But why? Did she feel she could bring a new realité to one of the most famous panto roles? Er, no. She wanted to "wear lycra leggings and slap my thigh a lot". Over-worked, we reckon.



Rod Lawton (Editor) as ERMINTRUDE UGLY

A grim tale, readers. Rod was mighty reluctant to dress up in drag. It took six of us to hold him down, prise him into the outfit and parade him round the Future offices (so he could get used to the costume, of course). One of the blokes on *PC Plus* asked him out.



Adam Waring (Techie Bod) as HATTERSLEY UGLY

Adam W doesn't seem to need much of an excuse to dress up, whether it's as Dracula on Hallowe'en, Guy Fawkes on Bonfire Night, or an ugly sister here. He was still wearing the outfit when we met him down the pub the following night. He wants to buy it, apparently.



Adam Peters (Staff Writer) as GEMIMA UGLY

Believe it or not, Spotty has actually got an A-level in Drama (strange but true). For his practical exam he 'rapped' the opening speech to *Richard III* whilst throwing paper snowflakes into the audience. "Er, I failed the practical, if you must know." That's a relief.

PROTYPE – THE RETURN OF ARNOR!

Did you think Arnor had developed their last CPC product?

We must admit, it was starting to look that way. But now we are pleased to announce a stunning new arrival - *Protype*. This provides *Protext* with the improved printing features that many of you have requested.

We honestly believe that it is not possible to achieve better quality output from a 9 pin printer than with *Protype*. Just look at the examples below - all printed on an elderly Amstrad DMP 2000!

Protype costs just £30 and is available on disc only. It works with *Protext* ROM and disc versions and may also be used as a stand alone program.

5 years after its original release Protext remains indisputably the leading CPC word processor. In the February 1991 issue, AMSTRAD ACTION said:

> *"Without doubt the most complete word processor available for the CPC ... Protext is very much a professional quality program."*

AMSTRAD ACTION speed tests show Protext to be many times faster than other programs, for example:

Replace operation		Delete 17k block	
Program A	- 94 secs	*Program A*	- 17 secs
Program B	- 74 secs	*Program B*	- 15 secs
Protext	- 5 secs	*Protext*	- 1 sec

Prices

Protype	£30	(disc, Protext not required)
Protext + Protype	£45	(disc)
Rombo ROM box	£20	(when at least one ROM is purchased)

ROM prices

Protext	£25	Promerge Plus	£20
Maxam	£25	Utopia	£20
Prospell	£20	Maxam 1½	£20
		BCPL	£20

Protype is a typesetting print enhancer designed to squeeze maximum quality from low-cost 9 and 24-pin dot matrix printers. This paragraph shows how **Protype** can work to a right-hand margin.

Liquid^{293K}	c_p/J kg^{-1} K^{-1}
① Acetic acid ($C_2H_4O_2$)	$1{\cdot}96 \times 10^3$
② Acetone (C_3H_6O)	$2{\cdot}21 \times 10^3$
③ Water$_{sea}$ (H_2O, salts)	$3{\cdot}90 \times 10^3$

[A] **Ganga común**, «*Pterocles alchata*», 38cm
♀ con tres bandas en el pecho †
♂ faja pectoral castaña ‡

supports over 40 European languages including:

Anglo-Saxon	þ ð æ œ ā ē ī ō ū ǣ œ̄
Czech	á č ď é ě í ň ó ř š ť ú ů ý ž
Latvian	ā č ē ģ ī ķ ļ ņ š ū ž
Polish	ą ć ę ł ń ó ś ź ż
Turkish	á â ç ğ ı î ö ș ü

[B] just some of the non-ASCII symbols:

« » „ " " ¡ ¿ 1º 2ª ¶ §
© £ ¥ ¤ ¢ ½ ± ÷ × ↓ °
← → ♯ ♭ ß ð Đ þ Þ ø Ø
å Å æ Æ œ Œ ƚ Ł đ ħ Ħ
←line graphics too→

This actual-size printout was produced <u>in one operation</u> on a 9-pin printer using Arnor's Protext and **Protype**.

Protype (disc only) works on:
- ○ Amstrad CPC6128 [+]
- ○ CPC664 & 64K expansion
- ○ CPC464 & 64K expansion & disc drive

Uses less than 350 bytes of the main 64K.

PROTYPE IS VERSATILE:

- *multiple diacritics (accents) with any letter* (ḕ ṇ̄ s̈ Ạ)
- *tabulates proportional text / micro-justifies spaces*
- 240 DPI × 216 DPI *resolution on a 9-pin printer!*
- *works with all 9-pin or 24-pin Epson-compatible printers*
- *use from Protext, Basic or machine code*
- *includes the seven fonts used in this demonstration*
- *choice of character designs within a font* (page or page)
- !txet fo enil a fo gnigami rorrim
- superscript, sub script, <u>underline</u>, [b] box, ⓔ encircle
- *kerning (spacing of 'difficult' character pairs* (AV)

Fæder ūre, þū þe eart on heofonum	(Old English)
Ár n-atheir, atá ar nèamh	(Irish Gaelic)
Fader vår som är i himmelen	(Swedish)
Svargayehi vädasiṭina apagē piyāṇeni	(Sinhalese)
Teve mūsų, kurs es danguje	(Lithuanian)
Pater noster, qui es in cælis	(Latin)

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ACTION TEST

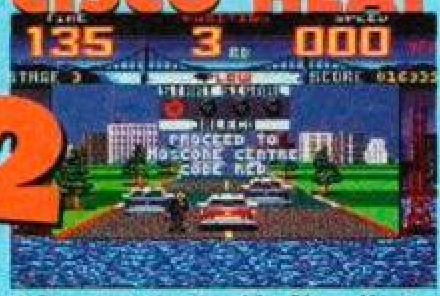
Which is going to be biggest this Christmas, *The Simpsons* or *Dizzy's Excellent Adventures*? We already know which is best...

38 DIZZY COLLECTION
Codemasters



● Can the Codies top the charts.

42 CISCO HEAT
Mirrorsoft



● Go round the bend in *Cisco Heat*.

28 SIMPSONS
Ocean



● Just the thing to go with your Bart dolls, Bart bubble bath etc...

40 OUTRUN EUROPA
US Gold



● *Out Run Europa* is the best of the series – by a mile!

50 PIT-FIGHTER
Domark



● *Pit Fighter* really is the pits. Sorry, Domark!

SUPER SPACE INVADERS



DOMARK ■ £10.99 cass, £17.99 disk

"Hello, Keith Floyd here with a recipe for you. Take a classic old arcade game, remove all the gameplay, slow it down to a previously unplumbed level of laboriousness, throw in some invisible sprites, and bung it in a fancy box. Then charge three or four times what would be an acceptable price for it."

The game is a reworking of one of the very first computer games ever. You control a ship moving left to right at the bottom of the screen, firing at the rows of aliens that move around above you. The original only featured sideways scrolling baddies, whereas this one also gives you various other formations, kamikaze crews (a la *Galaxians*), etc, together with some largely unfathomable power-ups.

Super Space Invaders is sad. As pitiful remakes go, only a Rolf Harris recording of the Beatles' *Sgt Pepper* album could possibly eclipse it. Damning criticism indeed, but can we justify it? Well for a start, this game is slower than any BASIC type-in we have ever received. It takes the rows of aliens 53 seconds to travel a third of the way across the screen.

Meanwhile the background graphics use double-size pixels, and the backgrounds are often of almost the same colour as the 'sprites' on top of them (making the sprites virtually invisible on numerous occasions).



● It's slow, stodgy and altogether sad. *Super Space Invaders* just isn't sharp enough or clear enough to cut it.

Not only that, many of the features listed in the manual (bonus levels, end-of-level guardians) aren't included in the Amstrad version. There is a simultaneous two-player option, but don't be surprised to see your partner taking conrol of your spaceship every time you stop moving (and whenever they hold down Fire for a prolonged period).

If you hear of a local school or club preparing a time capsule, suggest that a copy of this is included. Not because it represents the early nineties in any way, but just because twenty feet under the ground is the best place for it.

Adam P

SECOND OPINION

"The Space Invaders game style relies on split-second timing and exact positioning – damned nigh impossible with something as slug-like as this." **Rod Lawton**

FIRST DAY TARGET SCORE

Get to Level Six

SUPER SPACE INVADERS VERDICT

GRAPHICS............ 10%
Blocky, painfully slow, a rather ill-advised choice of colours.

SONICS................ 54%
Pleasing passable, though more suited to a submarine sim.

GRAB FACTOR....... 60%
Very easy to get into, though the lack of speed is off-putting.

STAYING POWER... 14%
Eleven levels to get through, but little reason to bother.

RATING 34%

The only space that Super Space Invaders is likely to invade is that in your waste basket.



● Yo, this dude looks ordinary enough. But he might be a wicked alien space fiend. Whack those X-ray specs on to find out.



● Oo-er. That awning was purple and white a second ago. Now it's a safe red colour. How did we do that then? Mull it over.



● Weirdabunga! What's gone wrong with the screen? Nothing. We've just bunged on our alien-spotting X-ray spectacles. Ha!

"Yo, my name's Bart Simpson, what's yours? Never mind, I don't really want to know. Listen up. Aliens have invaded my hometown of Springfield. Bad news, huh, dudes? Anyway, I've got to try and get rid of them, which ain't going to be easy.

"You see, they plan to take over the whole Universe. And to do that they need to, er, collect purple objects. Don't ask why man, just take it as read. Or red. There's these spray cans lying around, you see, which I can use to spray purple objects red. Caralumba!

"It's dead important I stop these dastardly aliens in their purple-gathering tracks. Just spare a thought for poor (well not very poor at all really) diminutive pop star Prince. One minute safely curled up in his luxurious mansion, the next standing naked in an empty field. It's down to me to spare him that indignity.

"Some things I can't actually get close enough to spray, so I've got to think of some other way to hide their purpleness. Like dropping things on them or, er, firing rockets at them. Sometimes when I jump some money appears, and if I collect it up I can buy magnets and rockets and stuff, which will be dead useful to me in my struggle. Except most of them I don't need, and they all disappear when I get to Level Two, but there you go.

"There are some nasty bad guys out there man, and I've got to avoid 'em. Some of them have disguised themselves as humans. Using my X-ray specs (pushing down on the joystick) you can see who's a real person and who's a slithery spider-like dude. If it's a spider, jump on its head, man. If it's a person, don't, or I'll lose a life.

"I've got four lives in all, and there's a selection of restart points. It's a bit of a tough challenge, actually, dudes. There's so many screens to wander through, and a lot of tricky puzzles to sort out. It'll keep you up way past bed-time, but then bed-time is for wimps, right?

"As well as money, there are other coin-like

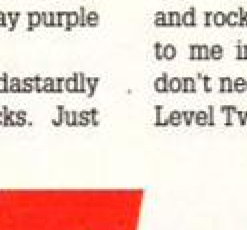
THE SIMPSO

BART VS THE SPACE MU

OCEAN ■ £10.99 cass, £15.99 disk

ON THE LEVEL

Bart vs The Space Mutants was the name of a particular episode of the TV series. This game takes ideas from several different episodes though. Here are the five levels:



LEVEL ONE – SPRINGFIELD

You start off wandering the streets of Springfield, jumping on aliens disguised as humans, and trying not to walk into aliens disguised as aliens. You need to re-paint, cover, or otherwise get shot of, all the purple things you stumble across.

LEVEL TWO – THE SHOPPING MALL

Now the aliens have decided that hats will work just as well as purple objects in their plan for Universe domination. So you've got to wander the mall, collecting hats hanging in mid air and jumping on disguised aliens' heads again (yawn). There's a few tricky obstacle-avoiding and platform-jumping bits on this section. (Getting across the mall pool is particularly trouble-fraught.)

LEVEL THREE – THE CIRCUS

In this stage you have to burst the balloons the aliens are flying in. Er, because balloons are a good substitute for hats and purple things in the intergalactic ones' big plan (sigh).

LEVEL FOUR – NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

One of my mates has just got a job in the Natural History Museum (*thank you for sharing that with us Adam – ed*). No doubt he has already begun shooting darts at all the exit signs. The aliens want to... well, we think you can just about work out the idea by now.



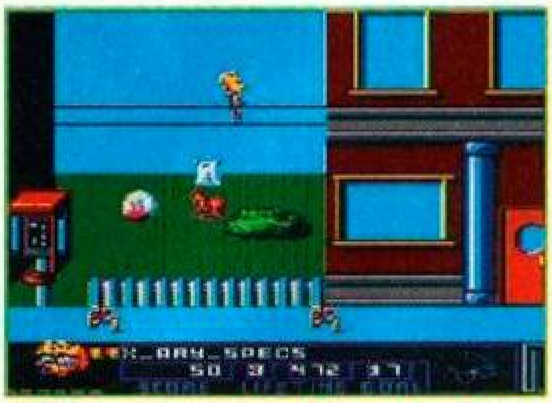
LEVEL FIVE – NUCELAR REPROCESSING PLANT

Nuclear fuel rods. Nuclear fuel rods? Untold screens of nasty-dodging pass, and finally the extra-terrestrial slimies are after something that might conceivably be of practical use to them. Hurrah! It's the plant where Homer (Bart's dad) works. Young Bart has to collect all the rods and bung them in the basement. Rodabunga! Er, and if you can do that then you've won. Probably.

SECOND OPINION

"The Simpsons is a conversion of a blockbusting (we assume) Nintendo game. Well it didn't bust too many blocks in our office. The game style is really old-fashioned."

Rod Lawton



● Tight-rope walking ahoy! It's that sort of devil-may-care attitude that's going to get you in trouble, young Simpson me lad.



● The starting screen, politely telling you what you have to do. You can start with that dustbin. You'll need to find a spray can first.

ONS
TANTS

things flying around. Each one I collect, a letter will appear at the bottom of the screen. If I collect all the letters of their name, then one of my folks will show up. Or at least they're supposed to. Maybe they're busy doing something else.

"Cos I'm such a radical dude I can jump on platforms that no-one else can see. I can bounce up and down on dustbins too (er, which is also quite useful). And I can do some pretty snazzy big jumps as well.

"There are five levels for me to pit myself against, and some of them are very big indeed. Don't have a cow, man (sheep are much better). Just remember, I'm doing this to save the Earth, the Universe, and, er, other things. It's a tough job, but someone has to do it. Eat my shorts. (Bring plenty of ketchup.)"

Adam P

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE SIMPSONS?



At first glance, *The Simpsons* looks like exactly what it is – a mid-'80s style jumping collect-em-up. Not the sort of game you expect in this day and age.

The first level is quite fun, as you hunt out purple objects to cover (hint: the spray can or rocket will deal with all but three of them). The flower pots are quite tricky to get at, but you can get away with leaving one of them unsprayed.

All this jumping on the bad guys' heads business is so passé (*don't you use words you don't understand – ed*) it's almost sad, but there you go. The whole thing is just a combination of *Technician Ted* and *Everyone's a Wally*, two games that were brilliant back then but out-dated now.

And where are the other family members? They're supposed to show up once you've collected all the letters in their name. But they don't. Which makes jumping on disguised aliens' heads a complete waste of time and effort. Humph.

Level Two is sad. You need to collect 22 hats. These are scattered all round the shopping mall, and also on the heads of all the people and aliens in disguise who wander past. Stand outside the fruit shop and jump on the head of each alien who leaves (use your X-ray specs here), and pretty soon you've got the 22.

The graphics and sound, meanwhile, are distinctly second-rate. OK, so *The Simpsons* is a conversion of a Nintendo game – Nintendo games characteristically feature small sprites and blocky, big backgrounds – but surely it could have been made to look better than this?

The gameplay? Six or seven years past its best-before date, unfortunately. The whole thing is like a scrolling platform adventure of yesteryear, and the sort of thing we'd expect to see in a budget game, not a full-price release. Still, *Ocean was hamstrung by the format of the original game* – *The Simpsons* is actually quite faithful to that original.

If it wasn't for that yellow chap and his edible shorts though, this would struggle to sell a single copy. Sorry, but we didn't like it.



● Oh dear. That bird is purple, but I can't jump high enough to spray it (which isn't a very ideologically sound thing to do anyway). Er...



● And that window blind is purple too. This is going to take a bit of thought. (But not, let's be honest, an awful lot.)



● Waaahey! It's that new Olympic sport, rotweiler-hurdling. And the American Simpson has got off to a flying start, eh, Brendan?



● "This week's *Melody Maker*, a Mars Bar and a can of Cherry Cola please." "Sorry mate, I only sell keys and wrenches." "Damn."

FIRST DAY TARGET SCORE

Finish Level One

THE SIMPSONS VERDICT

GRAPHICS............ 61%
Tiny sprites and hammer-and-chisel (crude) backgrounds.

SONICS................ 54%
A few "tchoo" noises, and not much else.

GRAB FACTOR....... 78%
The fact that it's Bart you're controlling adds to the appeal...

STAYING POWER... 60%
...and there's certainly plenty of game there size-wise.

RATING 55%

This belongs in 1985. More a regression than a progression.

MEGA PACK

KONIX/CODEMASTERS ■ £19.99 cass

Cowabunga joystick fans! It's that popular Konix *Speedking* thingie. But what's this? It's in a bundle with eight Codemasters games. What's all this about then...?

The *Mega Pack* is quite a neat idea. There have been packs like this around for the PC for quite a while, but we reckon this is the first 8-bit package of its kind.

To save shelf space (i.e. make sure it is well stocked and available for all machines), the *Mega Pack* includes Amstrad, Spectrum and C64 versions of the games all in one box. There are six tapes in all, two for each machine (with four progs on each).

The *Mega Pack* is a good way to give a trusty old 'stick a new lease of life, and is basically a box containing a joystick and two Codemasters *Quattro* packs. All the games are Codies back catalogue stuff, and each has featured on at least one (and in some cases, three!) *Quattro* pack(s).

In financial terms the pack gives you a joystick that retails at £12.99, together with £7.98 worth of games (the price of two *Quattro* packs), all for only £19.99. So that's, er... eight and nine is fifteen, carry the five, take away the penny, add the tens column, take away the seven... a saving of over £150!! (*Er, about a quid actually – ed.*) Oh.

If you need a new 'stick, and haven't got too many of the *Quattros*, then this could be the pack for you. Otherwise, the whole thing could be a bit of a dodo.

Major league waggling ahoy!

THE KONIX SPEEDKING

The *Speedking* is a joystick with a fearsome reputation. When AA featured its 'joystick jury' (issue 43), two out of the six judges plumped for it as their fave stick.

It's certainly very well designed. You cradle the 'stick in your left hand, with your middle or forefinger resting on the fire button. The waggly bit can be waggled either with your right hand, or (better still) the bottom of your right thumb.

This makes it pretty darned responsive, and lets you change direction quite quickly. There are problems though. For a start, if you're left-handed forget it - there's no way you'll be able to use the thing. The 'stick is fairly 'fat' too, so people with particularly small hands might also encounter probs.

The *Speedking* has been around for a fair while, and there are plenty of other hand-helds available that have weirder designs and are more comfortable to use (the *Navigator* and the *Bug* for a start). It's a trusty old work-horse though.



● The Speedking – solid and dependable.

THE GAMES

ATV Simulator

Pretty mediocre horizontally-scrolling racing game, featuring, believe it or not, ATVs (all-terrain vehicles – buggies, really). Naff graphics and dodgy sound, but playable.

59%



● Yo, buggy posse! It's time to leap in your ATV and take to grass, sand, concrete and ice (ice?) in puruit of, er, excellence.

BMX Simulator

Horizontally-viewed screech-em-up, with tiny sprites and a standard dirt track (with banks and jumps and stuff) to hare round. Once again, you're better off with the real thing. It's not bad though.

72%

Pro Tennis Simulator

The easiest tennis game to get to grips with, *PTS*, like most Codies 'sims', has 'budget' written all over it. But when so many full-price games are a load of trash, predictable and competent trans-mediocrity (*you what? – ed*) becomes something to cherish.

71%

Verdict 62%

A novel idea, but a joystick bundled with four or five good full-price games would be a lot better.

International Rugby Simulator

Then again, this one is brilliant. Whilst no match for *World Class Rugby*, it's blissfully full-featured where most rugby games are a load of half-arsed tosh. Any rugby/footie sim that lets you pass accurately has to be worth a 'yahoo'.

85%

MiG-29 Soviet Fighter

After Burner clone, but with crap scrolling, stupid enemies, and not a lot else.

31%



● War in the air, with the wind in your hair, in a big plane, it starts to rain, using your brain, a bit of a pain, you fell down a drain.

Grand Prix Simulator

Supersprint/Supercars style racing game. You get an overhead view of the whole track, as your tiny car races against other tiny cars. The rotate-style movement (as with *ATV* and *BMX* above) takes a while to get to grips with. Quite jolly.

82%

Advanced Pinball Simulator

Pinball is an odd sort of thing to try and 'simulate' on a computer. Some people might like it, but the sounds and effects you get on modern pinball games blows it away. And a bunch of pixels is no substitute for a metal ball anyway.

23%

Fruit Machine Simulator

The single most pointless game in computing history.

0%



● Stupid ideas number 239: A fruit machine that you can't win any money on.

Cheat Mode

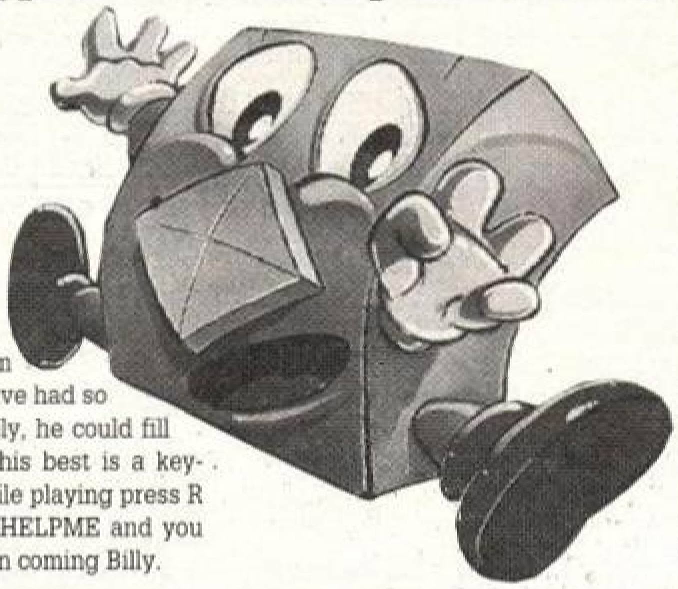
On the fifth day of Christmas my editor sent to me... 5 tons of tips, 4 gross of cheats, 3 million maps, 2 piles of pokes...

AA's **Chieftain of Cheating, PHIL HOWARD Presents another batch of pokes, hints, tips, solutions and passwords to all the latest games, together with some Golden Oldies.**

And don't forget, all you gamesplayers out there, that £25 mail order vouchers go to the suppliers of the best tips each month... keep 'em coming in!

VOUCHER £25

PUZZNIC



What can I say about William Huddleston of Innerleithen, I have had so many cheats from him just lately, he could fill the pages by himself. One of his best is a key-press for Ocean's *Puzznic* – While playing press R to enter the Retry menu, type HELPME and you will get infinite retries. Keep 'em coming Billy.

HUNCHBACK 2

Look, I know it's one of the oldest games in the world, but it keeps on popping up in the mailbag, so if you really want to cheat on *Hunchback 2*, then Emmet Brown of Ballmagroaty in N. Ireland has the keypress for you – type LAZY JONES in the Hi-score table.

TURRICAN

I've had a number of requests for a cheat for *Turrican* the first. Yes, there is a keypress built in, and Russ Mckenzie of Hull has supplied it – press P to pause the game then type VON and you will have a whole host of goodies. Then pressing DOWN, FIRE, RETURN and SHIFT will transport you to the next level.

MARSPORT – Phase One S

Andy Price of Dunstable makes yet another appearance, this time with his brother John to supply you with the solution to Phase One of *Marsport* on the *AA73* covertape. I think he had the solution left over from when he played the original game on a Spectrum – yeuchh... (I just can't keep a secret!) .

1 Enter 'Down Tube' in Coma level sector D.
2 Get gun permit from Elis level sector G.
3 Enter 'Up Tube' next to the supply locker to Daly sector D.
4 Put gun permit in 'Key' locker, then pick up the power gun from the locker to the left.
5 Go to a locker marked 'Charge' and drop the gun into it. Wait a few seconds for the locker to re-open and pick up the gun. The gun is now fully charged.
5(a) If any warriors come near you, give them a dose of the uzi 9mm!
6 Get the water from a supply locker on your current level – Daly sector D.
7 Then, go to Daly sector A to get the baking tin.
8 Get flour from Daly sector C.
9 Put the flour, water and baking tin in the 'Factor' locker at the Bakery to make a cake in Daly sector F.
10 Put the cake into the 'Key' locker at the Bakery to open the Bakery.
11 Go to Daly sector G and get the charcoal.
12 Go to Joly sector H and get the gauze (use a few down tubes on Elis level and so on until you reach Joly level).
13 Use lift to Iaxa sector C. Put charcoal and gauze in 'Factor' unit. Take the gas mask.
14 Enter 'Danger' door and when bomb explodes put gas mask in the 'Locker'. You will need the gas mask later.
15 Make your way to Iaxa sector G 'Map Room'.
16 Pick up 'earth map'. Go to Iaxa sector A, using the gas bomb.
17 Enter 'Ice Cream' door, pick up ice pack.
18 Go to Gill sector E, put earth map in 'Key' locker.
19 Soil Depot is now open.
20 Go to Gill sector C and put ice pack in 'Key' locker.
21 'Hot House' is now open. Pick up geranium from 'Supply' locker.
22 Go to Joly sector H. Put geranium in 'Key' locker.
23 'Plant Room' is now open.
24 Go to Iaxa sector H. Pick up the glass.
25 Go to Iaxa sector G and enter Map Room.
26 Pick up the sun chart. Goto Iaxa sector E and pick up the frame.
27 Goto Alba sector B. Put the glass, sun chart and frame into the factor unit. Pick up the eyeshield.
28 Enter Astronomy door. When nova bomb has detonated put the eyeshield in a locker.
29 Go to Daly sector F, enter the Bakery.
30 Pick up the dough from the supply locker.
31 Go to Iaxa sector A, enter ice cream room and pick up the cornet.
32 Go to Farr sector A, find the music room and put the cornet in the locker.
33 Music room is now open. Music to my ears!
34 Pick up the lute from the supply locker.
35 Go to Byer sector. Enter the door marked Oratory.
36 Pick up the dais and make your way to Byer sector E.
37 Put dough in key locker. The Banker door is now open.
38 Enter the door and make your way to Byer sector A.
39 Put dais and lute in Factor unit. Pick up the lead suit.
40 Enter the Danger door and wait for the radiation bomb to detonate.
41 Put the lead suit in the locker. Walk to Byer sector C.
42 Use the south 'Down tube' to enter Joly sector C.
43 Enter Safety door and pick up boots and earmuffs.
44 Return to the 'Up Tube' to go to Byer sector C.
45 Go to Byer sector A, enter the Danger door.
46 Put bomb in 'Key' locker. Theê door connected to sector B will now be open.
47 Go to Danger door and enter when sonic bomb has detonated. Put the earmuffs in the locker.
48 Go to Daly sector C. Put boots in 'Key' locker. The Chemist is now open.
49 Enter the chemist and pick up the oxygen.
50 Go to Alba sector A and pick up the empty-tank.

F-16 COMBAT PILOT

Jamie Murray of "Hackers Anonymous" (although he's not particularly anonymous!) is with us again this time with a tip for *F-16 Combat Pilot* – when on the mission screen, select the pilot's log, and press F1 on the keypad to enter a new call-sign. Enter MROTS TRESED (desert storm backwards) and then Enter and you should be able to embark on Operation Conquest without having to complete the mandatory missions first.

● Jamie and his pals are thinking of starting a fanzine with an emphasis on hacks and cheats, if you want to know more send an SAE to Jamie at: **103 STRATHAVEN ROAD, LESMAHAGOW, LANARKSHIRE ML11 ODN.**

ELITE

Elite always was a popular game, although landing on a space station often causes some frustration. Lee Bailey of York has a method to make it a bit easier:

1 Go to the system you want.
2 Press DEL to pause.
3 Press 1 to quit.

lution

51 Go to Coma sector A and put the empty tank and the oxygen in the Factor unit.
52 Pick up the air tank. Go to Danger room and wait for the complete vacuum. Put air tank in the locker.
53 Go to Byer sector E. Get the machines + calculators.
54 Go to Coma sector B. Pick up the steps from the locker.
55 Go to Farr sector G by using the danger room (vacuum).
56 Enter Games room. Put machines + calculators and steps into Factor unit.
57 Pick up the game+snakes and ladders. Put the game into the 'Key' locker.
58 Door connected to sector C will open.
59 Go to Alba sector D. Enter the room marked Director.
60 Pick up 'key 1+first key to m-central'.
61 Go to Byer sector E. Enter Banker door. Pick up 'key 2+second key to m-central'.
62 Go to Farr sector G. Pick up 'key 3+third key to m-central'.
63 Go to sector C and enter 'Down Tube'. Go to Hale sector H.
64 Drop key 2 in the locker at the bottom and drop key 3 into the other one.
65 M-central door is now open. Goto sector E.
66 Proceed towards sanctum to complete phase 1.
67 'Welcome to m-central! All restricted doors now open'.

WOT, NO POKES?

Don't get in a tizz – of course we've got pokes. But from now on we're putting them on the covertape! Why? Well, if you think about it, it makes a whole load of sense. There are two main reasons:

● It leaves lots more space in *Cheat Mode* for maps, solutions, passwords and keypress cheats
● Being able to load pokes in from the covertape means no more typing and no more mistakes!

What more could you ask for? (Apart from a wad of used fivers in a plain brown envelope, of course.)

It also means there's now some room for a few classic old pokes each month. So, if you've been struggling with a game that has no cheat, or you weren't around the first time round, let me know and I'll see what I can do.

Meanwhile, credit where credit's due... The guys don't want to be left out, and you do want the Multiface cheats don't you? So here is this month's Roll of Honour in *Pick of the Pokes.*

TURRICAN 2 & THUNDERJAWS

Paul Hornsey of West Lothian supplies a Multiple poke for the *AA73* covertape's *Turrican 2* and *Thunderjaws* demos. They load via the covertape menu.

Address	Poke	Effect
***Turrican 2* demo**		
9B47	A7	
3E65	3E	Inf. lives
3E66	FF	Inf. Smarts
***Thunderjaws* demo**		
47CC	A7	Inf. credits

HOBGOBLIN & LOPEARS

Graham Smith of Street is still in with a few of the cheats for *Hobgoblin* and *Lopears*, which I recieved from him a while ago, Whats happening, Graham? I havent heard from you for a while.

● ***Hobgoblin***
Multiface poke for inf lives
Address = 1234 Poke = 00

● ***Lopears***

Address	Poke	Effect
64K version		
2BA6	00	Inf. energy
2D4E	00	Inf. time
128K version		
2BA4	00	Inf. energy
2D4C	00	Inf. time

NORTH AND SOUTH

Andy Price (what Cheat Mode would be complete without him?) has done something fairly terrific with the disk version of *North and South* and supplied infinite time on the fight scene – and you can select the number of bags stolen from the train.

Address	Poke	Effect
0443	00	time
13B2	No.	Bags

BOMBJACK 1, BOMBJACK 2 & GHOSTS 'N' GOBLINS

The Golden Oldies this month are supplied by Stephen Matthews of Kings Lynn. They are for classics *Bombjack 1* and *2*, plus *Ghosts 'n' Goblins*.

Address	Poke	Effect
Ghosts 'n' Goblins		
509C	00	Inf. Lives
Bombjack 1		
19FD	00	Inf. lives
Bombjack 2		
18E5	18	Inf. lives

Using the pokes on the covertape

1. Load the poke you want from the covertape into your computer.
2. Take out the covertape and put in your game tape or disk.
3. Type |DISC if you are using a disk poke.
4. Type RUN to run the routine (not RUN "" (CTRL+ENTER) as you normally would)

● You should find that the game will load normally, or that you will be given instructions on what you need to do.

4 Press Y to load or save.
5 Press 2 to save (save it).
6 Press 3 to end and play the rest of the game.

RENEGADE 3

Renegade 3 – the Final Chapter has recently been re-released by Hit Squad. Jonathan Crozier of Northumberland says hold down the keys Q and T on the first menu, then at any time if you press Q and T again you will advance a level. You also you get infinite lives.

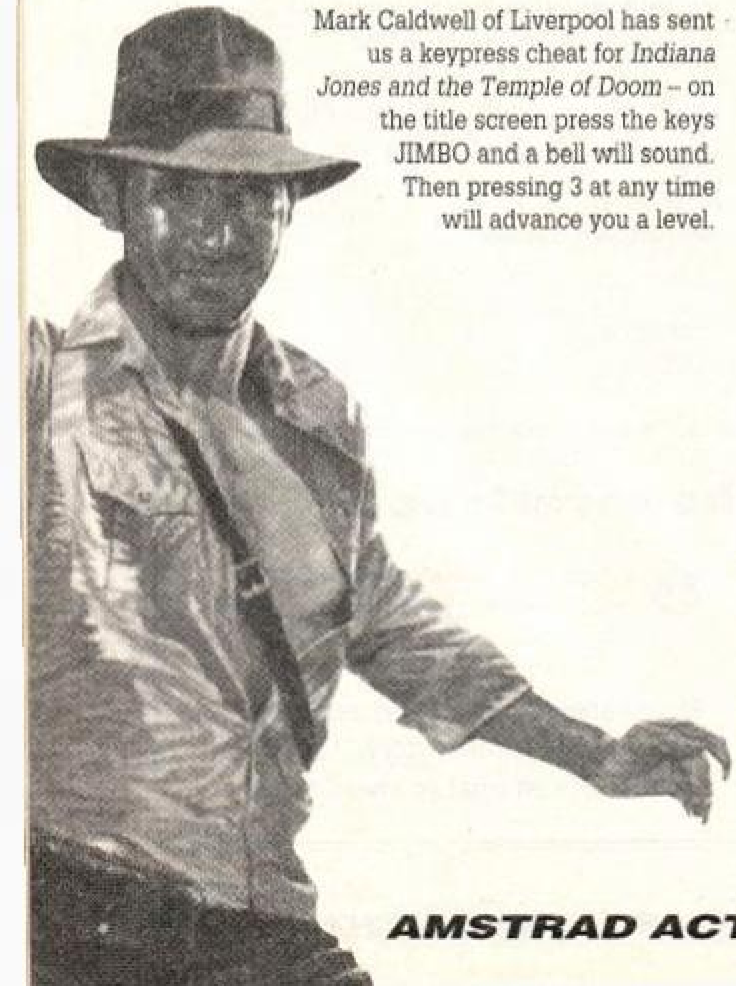


INSECTOR HECTI

D. J. Thomas of Doncaster and Ben Watkins of Hinkley have both supplied the passwords to Hi-Tec's *Insector Hecti*. They are: RING, GRIM, NONE, FOOD, ANEX, OPAL, BRIM, MAIM, ETCH and ICER. Thanks chaps, anyone found the key-press cheat for this game yet?

INDIANA JONES AND THE TEMPLE OF DOOM

Mark Caldwell of Liverpool has sent us a keypress cheat for *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* – on the title screen press the keys JIMBO and a bell will sound. Then pressing 3 at any time will advance you a level.



WE WISH YOU A MERRY MULTIFACE...

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Paul Stuart Williams of Broomhall, in his own particularly clever style, has put together a myriad of pokes for the games *Marsport* (*AA73* covertape) and *Wizard Wars* for this Christmas Multiface extravaganza. Happy Christmas, Paul...

● *Marsport*

Address	Poke	Effect
7389	86	Inf Charge

Objects are carried in the locations A647 – A64A. Poke these adrresses with numbers 01 to 44 to change objects:



01 – Power Gun, 03 – Gun permit, **04 – Charcoal**, 05 – Gauze, **06 – Empty tank**, 07 – Oxygen, **08 – Air tank**, 09 – Water, **0A – Flour**, 0B – Baking tin, **0C – Cake**, 0D – Geranium, **0E – Earth map**, 0F – Sun chart, **10 – Mars map**, 11 – Ear muffs, **12 – Projector**, 13 – Hyper gun, **14 – Boots**, 15 – Dough, **16 – Gas mask**, 17 – Vallium, **18 – Bomb**, 19 – Kettle, **1A – Eyeshield**, 1B – Key 1, **1C – Key 2**, 1D – Key 3, **1E – Helmet**, 1F – Toupee, **20 – Artifact**, 21 – Game, **22 – Glass**, 23 – Frame, **24 – Lead suit**, 25 – Syringe, **26 – Tea**, 27 – Insect, **28 – Pointe**, 29 – Antidote, **2A – Ice pack**, 2B – Dais, **2C – Lute**, 2D – Cornet, **2E – Bomb**, 2F – Steps, **30 – Machines**, 31 – Key, **32 – N-codex**, 33 – H-codex, **34 – I-codex**, 35 – W-codex, **36 – V-codex**, 37 – T-codex, **38 – 6-codex**, 39 – G-codex, **3A – D-codex**, 3B – E-codex, **3C – Death**, 3D – Mute, **3E – Manifesto**, 3F – Strainer, **40 – E-token**, 41 – N-token, **42 – T-token**, 43 – R-token, **44 – Y-token**.

● *Wizard Warz* (disk)

Level One

Address	Poke	Effect
1D57	FF	Spiritual points
1D58	FF	Physical points
1D59	FF	Mental points

Spells for level 1 are between 1D08 and 1DAF. Poke with number:

01 – Protection, **02 – Fireball**, 03 – Ice Blast, **04 – Spit(?)**, 05 – Rock Shower, **06 – Magic Missile**, 07 – Teleport, **08 – Heavenly Bolt**, 09 – Fear, **0A – Blind**, 0B – See Invisible, **0C – Fly**, 0D – Stun, **0E – Mind Wreck**, 0F – Forget, **10 – Evil Eye**, 11 – Neutralise Magic, **12 – Steal Spell**, 13 – Wall of Ice, **14 – Wall of Fire**, 15 – Wall of Stone, **18 – Invisible**.

Level Two

Address	Poke	Effect
1C77	FF	Mental
1770	FF	Physical

Spells for level 2 are between 1CC6 and 1CDE. Poke with numbers as before.

● Do you need an extra advantage in Level Two? If so, reset addresses 1C8D, 1C8E and 1C8F to 00 for each new enemy – they will now fall with just one blow!

Just in case you don't already how to put in these BLACK BOX POKES, here are the steps to success. A (t)s or (d) before the address indicates whether the poke was written for a tape or disk game.

a) Load the game as normal.
b) Press the RED button on the MULTIFACE.
c) Press "T" for tool.
d) Press "*" to make sure you select the code.
e) Press "H" for HEXADECIMAL input.
f) Press "SPACE" for input.
g) Type in the ADDRESS (4 characters ie. 3A7C)
h) Type in the POKE (2 characters ie. A7)
i) Press "RETURN".
j) If there is more than one poke goto (f)
k) Press "ESC" back to the menu.
l) Press "R" return to the game.

THE LIGHT CORRIDOR

Having trouble getting through *The Light Corridor*? Well I've had a set of passwords in from Mihai Dragomir of Bucuresti in Romania (*AA* certainly reaches the parts other mags don't – probably). Thanks for the info, Mihai – and keep in touch!

1 – 0000, 2 – 5400, **3 – 0101**, 4 – 3901, **5 – 2602**, 6 – 9902, **7 – 4303**, 8 – 9003, **9 – 6904**, 10 – 3305, **11 – 9305**, 12 – 3406, **13 – 0407**, 14 – 6407, **15 – 2008**, 16 – 7408, **17 – 4709**, 18 – 3810, **19 – 0511**, 20 – 6811, **21 – 3212**, 22 – 0213, **23 – 8213**, 24- 5014, **25 – 1015**, 26 – 8215, **27- 5116**, 28 – 0117, **29 – 7017**, 30 – 5518, **31 – 2819**, 32 – 9919, **33 – 7320**, 34 – 2521, **35 – 0622**, 36- 3722, **37 – 1223**, 38 – 4523, **39 – 4124**, 40 – 1825, **41 – 1926**, 42 – 9726, **43 – 5927**, 44 – 0528, **45 – 7328**, 46 – 3929, **47 – 3030**, 48 – 0531, **49 – 8431**, 50 – 9932.



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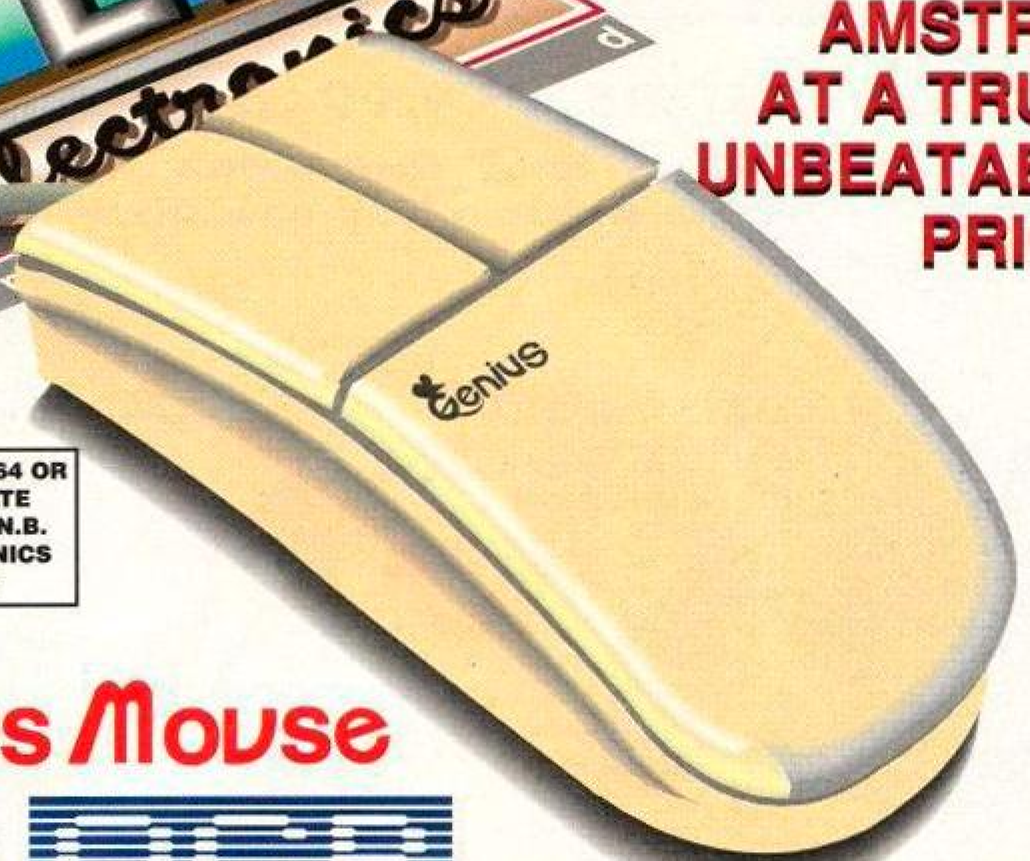
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AMS MSE 3

DIZZY'S EXCELL

CODEMASTERS ■ £9.99 cass

Eggabunga, Dizzy fans! There's two oldies and three newies on the spanking new Dizzy compo. Hurrah...!

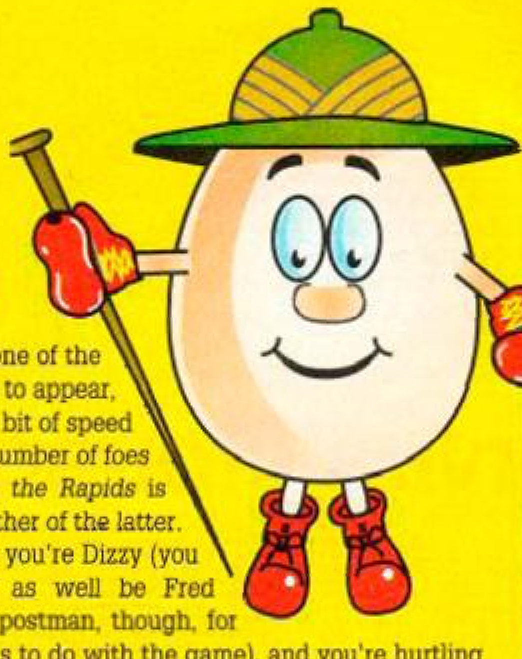


● Of the three new games on the pack, *Rapids* is the only non-adventurey one. It's a fairly simple steer-em-up.



● Here we are, just a floating down the rapids, singing "doo wop dum didy doo didy dey". Gosh, what an original game this really is.

DIZZY DOWN THE RAPIDS



Toobin' was never one of the best coin-op convos to appear, but at least it had a bit of speed and a reasonable number of foes in it. *Dizzy Down the Rapids* is *Toobin'* without either of the latter.

You're in barrel, you're Dizzy (you could just as well be Fred Smith the postman, though, for what it has to do with the game), and you're hurtling (crawling) down some rapids, trying to avoid things like crocodiles, whilst collecting apples to bung at the enemy.

As opposed to the game *Toobin'* where you travel down some rapids, trying to avoid crocodiles and collecting tin cans to bung at the enemy. Ho hum. You get enemies bunging things at you from the river bank (*Toobin'* style), rocks you have to steer round (ditto), and all that sort of stuff.

Dizzy Down the Rapids isn't an out-and-out Spectrum port like *Toobin'* was. Even so, the Codies might as well have just used the *Toobin'* code (adding a few pauses to slow it down).

Don't bother with the word "derivative", you'll find some much better ones in the thesaurus.

Ten Dizzy facts

Dizzy's our pal, but how much do we really know about him? Did you know for instance that:

1) Most people reckon that Dizzy is an ordinary household egg, but if he was he'd break a few seconds into every adventure.

2) Cos eggs break really easily.

3) *Your Sinclair* recently announced to the world that Dizzy was actually an egg-shaped piece of mutton fat jade (a sort of stone).

4) But they just made that up.

5) So-called 'comedian' Vic Reeves has claimed for several years that the character was actually based on him (he used to be quite fat and had lots of friends whose names began with 'd').

6) He even went so far as to record a hit single with top pop combo The Wonderstuff affirming his belief as to the egg character's true origins.

7) Codemasters responded by issuing a press release stating that Dizzy was bigger than Bryan Adams.

8) Which was a complete lie.

9) Because Dizzy is only about three quarters of an inch, whereas Bryan Adams is a good six foot.

10) And Canadian.

SECOND OPINION

"There are both good and indifferent games in this compilation. Nevertheless, at a tad under a tenner it's great value."

Rod Lawton



● The opening screen. A locked door, a jug, a pile of leaves, a box of matches – think it over.



● This nasty troll chappy isn't going to let you pass. But you can probably get the pick-axe.



● And here's a cavey sort of thing. With a bat and rocks and slime and stuff in it.

PRINCE OF THE YOLK FOLK

Standing only 30 screens tall, *Prince* is a bit titchy compared to *Spellbound*, but it's also a lot less convoluted. And you won't have to wait till the after-life (provided there is one) to finish it.

Prince has got a really hippy trippy plot. Just imagine all the weirdest bits out of *The Magic Roundabout* all happening at once and Dizzy having to sort everything out.

The encouragingly simple lateral thinking puzzle you solve to get out of the first room sets the scene for the rest of the game. A little bit of thought and a little bit of exploration and you should be able to work out what the pick-up objects you encounter are for.

This is a *Dizzy* game as it should be. Complex enough to present a long-term challenge, but not so contrived in puzzle solutions as to propel you towards a padded cell. Smart.

'NT ADVENTURES



● This is *Panic Dizzy*. Crosses and circles and things. Stunning, we don't think.

PANIC DIZZY

Is there a toddler in your household? If so, don't bother loading *Panic Dizzy*; just watch them playing with their toy postbox instead. Another re-release, *Panic* is a (sooner or later) fast-moving *Tetrisy* sort of thing, where you move the joystick from left to right so the falling shapes fall through correctly-shaped holes. It's competent, but doesn't do much you couldn't do with a 20-line BASIC type-in (speed excepted).

Verdict 74%

Spellbound Dizzy	73%
Prince of the yolk folk	80%
Dizzy down the rapids	49%
Kwik snax	76%
Panic Dizzy	35%

Two reasonably good Dizzy games and three Dizzified arcade games (two of them a load of tosh). It'll sell, but is it art?

SPELLBOUND DIZZY

This game is supposed to be the mainstay of the compilation. At 105 rooms it's the biggest Dizzy game ever (bigger than *Magic Land* and *Fantasy World* put together), and it's one of only two Dizzy adventures in this package. (*Prince of the Yolk Folk* is the other one.)

It shares with *Prince* the distinction of being the first *Dizzy* adventure not to have been designed by the Oliver Twins (Codies stalwarts and original creators of the little egg chap).

It hasn't deviated much from the standard Dizzy formula, though. As usual your Yolk Folk chums (Dylan, Daisy, Grand Dizzy and the other two, or is it three?) are in hot water. Thanks to your messing about with a spell book, they've been magicked into imprisonment in a strange underworld kind of place. And you've got to solve all the puzzles in the right orde to set them free. Yawn.

Graphically *Spellbound* is aeons ahead of its predecessors. The star himself looks so much more stylish and detailed, as does the land he explores. But is it too difficult? The Codies reckon this one will take about four months to solve. How many but the most committed of Dizzy/Balrog fans could plug away for that long at a single game? Without either tearing their hair out in frustration or running up a parents' nightmare of a phone bill calling 0898. Hmm...



● Wooo wooo. Dizzy's in a coal shaft and he's haring down the track in a coal wagon. Can you spot a potential problem, readers?



● "Hello, is that the Dizzy helpline? Help! We're drowning quite horribly. We were supposed to find an aqualung first, eh? Oh."

There are a lot of interesting new ideas chucked in. Dizzy scuba-diving, Dizzy in an underground ride, etc. They might raise a brief smile, but you feel they were just chucked in for the sake of it, as i there was some list of things Dizzy had never done that were being crossed off one by one.

There's not a lot that can really be said about the game. It's a Dizzy adventure like any other. Just a little big bigger, less inspired and more show-offish. Not a classic by any means.

But still miles better than most full price coin-op convos, of course.

KWIK SNAX

This is one of the pack's two re-releases, and it's a pretty good game actually, though it does become quite easy after a little practice. You've got to whizz round some mazes, collecting fruit and stuff, and avoiding the baddies. You can shunt the bricks that make up the maze around, allowing you to crush the nasties and create a safer passage to the remaining collectables.

Kwik Snax is a good game, with pretty addictive gameplay and buckets of playability, but that doesn't hide the fact that (a) Dizzy looks like he has just been thrown in at the last minute to help the game sell, and (b) it's another blatant act of gameplay larceny (a game called *Pengo* being the victim on this occasion).

Professional Maze Sim by any other name.



● *Kwik Snax* is a fab and funky maze game. What's more, it's got penquins in it.



● Teddy bears and strawberries – the two best inventions of all time. And, er, clocks too.



● "Blimey, you lot are bananas." "That's right mate." "Thought you were. Thanks. Bye."



● Nothing like a good Sunday afternoon cycle. Shame we've got to whizz around crashing into things. This could be quite relaxing.



● Wheeee. That barrel contains an extra nitro boost turbo-charge thingie. Great, eh? Only we've riden past it. Bobble hats!



● And here's the old bill. Avoiding these guys is the main aim of stage one (time limits aren't a problem). Time for a spot of grass-cutting.

OUT RUN

US GOLD ■ £11.99 cass, £16.99 disk

Pain. Damp. Dark. Pain. Simeon King winced as his senses slowly began to return. His brain struggled to make sense of the shapeless blurs his eyes were recording. His head ached as if there was an axe embedded in it. He moved his hand tq his skull to check. No axe, just a bump.

He suddenly realised he was lying in half an inch of water, and painfully dragged himself to a vertical position, coughing as he rose. Documents. Simeon virtually tore his jacket to shreds as he quickly rifled through the pockets. Gone. Even before he had climbed the stairs and kicked open the door that separated him from daylight, he knew his Ferrari F40 would have gone the same way. Damn.

Struggling to find a pay-phone that still had a receiver attached, he called directory enquiries. "British Secret Service, please," he said, mustering what politeness he could. Checking his pockets, he realised the swine had taken his pocket money too. 'Z' wasn't going to be happy at Unit 6's most senior operative making a reverse charges call...

Out on a limb

"He hung up," fumed Simeon King incredulously. "The great fat nerd hung up."

"Pardon?" said the old woman in the hat.

"Oh shut up," said King, pulling the phone out of the wall, and barging past her to the roadside. They didn't believe him. They would have traced his call. They'd be sending someone to 'terminate' him. He was on his own. He'd have to retrieve the documents and deliver them as planned. But how?

Suddenly his nose started to flash. Of course! The documents had been impregnated with a molecular tracking signal. He looked around for transport. An unattended motorbike. He didn't have a driving licence, but what the hell.

"Excuse me, young man," said the old woman in the hat. King turned angrily, punched her on the nose, and ran to the waiting bike.

"Lucky they left the keys in the ignition and the owner's manual hanging from the handlebars," he muttered to himself, as the engine roared into life.

Tour de England

It was a bright, clear day. The Houses of Parliament and Big Ben looked resplendent in the background. Funny, thought Simeon to himself, this is Warwickshire. Oh well.

Another bike drew up alongside him. The rider looked across at King, grinning menacingly. (Though King couldn't see that, because the bloke was wearing a helmet.) The mysterious cyclist swerved, shoulder-barging King into a bush. King yanked the bike back onto the road. An enemy agent? One of his own side? Who cares, the guy was dead meat.



● Waaah! It's a helicopter. It's a flipping helicopter! Yikes. Er, keep calm. Erm, steer over to the right a bit, it'll probably go away soon.

Simeon drew his bike up alongside the other chap's, and swerved. Once. Twice. Three times. The enemy bike hit a lamp-post and exploded. Simeon laughed, but his nose wasn't flashing as brightly as before. The signal was getting faint. He hit the big red button on the handlebar, and kicked one of the bike's limited nitro boosts into action. Blimey, he thought, whizzing past a crap red mini at 254 mph, this is fast!

Simeon King's Travels



● Simeon discovers an unattended motorbike (complete with helmet) and goes in pursuit of, er, justice.



● He reaches Dover and finds a jet-ski. Convenient, huh? The chase shifts from land to sea.



● At Calais he gets hold of a flash Porsche. And there's a powerboat and a Ferrari still to come!



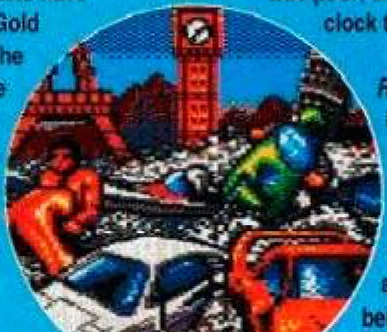
● But unfortunately the reviewer's so crap he gets pulled in, and we don't get to see levels 4-7. Puh!



● Stage two, and the English Channel (or the *Chanel Francais*, as the French call it) beckons. Waves, rocks and enemy boats ahoy!

Barrels littered the road. That's dangerous, thought King, picking one up, only to find to his amazement that it was filled with vitally needed petrol. He picked up another, smaller one, to find it contained an extra charge for the nitro boost. How odd!

The Out Run story...



The *Out Run* series of arcade cabinets have been converted to the CPC by US Gold with varying degrees of success. The original *Out Run*, a smash hit in the arcades (largely due to being the first car shaped sit-in cabinet), was a complete stinker on the CPC, being just about the slowest game of all time (it scored 37% in AA30).

About a year later US Gold announced it was releasing *Out Run Europa* as the follow-up. It then changed its mind (not before *Your Sinclair* had put *Europa* on the cover, though, ho ho), and decided to release *Turbo Out Run* first. This game was a lot faster than the first one, but still pretty dull. Collision detection was poor, and there was only one car and the clock to compete against (64%, AA52).

And now, at last, we get *Out Run Europa*. Has the wait been worth it? Certainly has. US Gold have had the good sense to use only the basic idea of the original arcade game (racing across Europe), and have constructed a whole new game around it. The version of *ORE* being coded in 1989 featured just the Ferrari Testrossa (the car in all the other *Out Run* games). The version now in front of us has motorbikes, jetskis, and all sorts. And buckets of speed too. Nice one. (84%, AA76)

RAVE!

EUROPA



● Crusin' round Paris in a Porsche, it's better than military torture, driving in a car, like a top film star, it's a bit like living in Horsha(m).



● Aren't French cars crap? Our one's all right, but what *is* this up front? Looks like one of those cars clowns drive into circus rings in.

Suddenly his wandering thoughts were interrupted by a police siren. Cripes! Either 'Z' had called the cops or someone objected to his cycling round narrow country lanes at 200 mph plus (on a stolen bike).

"Pull over," came the crackle from the tannoy on the roof, "joy riding is neither big nor clever. Please pull over, so we can nick you and beat you up."

King put the pedal to the medal. The cop car swerved violently, trying to ram him off the road. This isn't very friendly, thought King to himself, but if they catch me I'm finished. He couldn't afford to get caught behind the rozzermobile. He swerved across to the side of the road, and shot through on the grass. Phew!

SECOND OPINION

"If only Super Monaco Grand Prix had been this fast! Out Run Europa is smooth, too, and really playable. You won't finish it in a hurry, either!" **Rod Lawton**

FIRST DAY TARGET SCORE

Get to Spain

The French Connection



Simeon made it to London with less than a second to spare, but the baddies had moved on, down south.

More motorbikes, minis and police cars came and went, till King eventually reached Dover. He raced along the white cliffs. His nose was fading again – they'd taken to the water. Stealing a jet-ski off a small child, King followed suit.

Rocks. Buoys. Other boats. It was like Picadilly flippin' Circus in the Channel. Then a big helicopter showed up. Lucky that kid had a rocket launcher fitted, thought Simeon to himself.

He made it across the channel easily, and found a discarded Porsche in the car park at Calais. A wave of deja vu flooded over him as the sirens of the foreign fuzz pierced the quiet of the French countryside.

It would be Spain next, then a powerboat ride across the Mediterranean. If he was lucky, he'd find his Ferrari in Italy, and catch the bad guys in Germany. He'd have to hurry, though, and he could be pulled over by the police at any time. He had four chances to make it through.

"It's a hard and badly-paid job," muttered King to himself, pondering the secret agent's lot. "If only I'd listened to mummy, and become a postman instead."

His pathetic reminiscences were soon cut short as another police car came into view...

Adam P

OUT RUN EUROPA
VERDICT

GRAPHICS............ 88%
Very fast, very colourful, and nice to look at.

SONICS................ 79%
Reasonable engine noise, sirens and explosions.

GRAB FACTOR....... 90%
The opening stage is the best of the lot.

STAYING POWER... 81%
Five different vehicles to drive, and seven stages.

RATING 84%

Getting stopped by the police can be frustratingly hard to avoid, but the speed and variety win through in the end.

CISCO HEAT

MIRRORSOFT ■ £11.99 cass, £15.99 disk

"This is Murray Walker coming to you live from the streets of San Francisco. The place that is, not the TV series. Today is the day of the annual police race, and we will be focusing on one driver, AA Reader, in this contest.

"The race takes place over five stages. Competitors have to whizz through the 'Frisco traffic, trying not to kill too many members of the public in the process. AA Reader is in the red car right at the back of the field, and the first stage is about to start...

"And there they go! It's blue car in the lead, followed by blue car, blue car, blue car, blue car, blue car and blue car. Then red car.

"And look at Reader, steaming through there. Into fifth place. Fourth. Third. Second. And look at that! Look at that! Reader's crashed straight into the back of blue car. What a mess that's going to leave. Er, no, it's not a crash actually. Reader's just locked bumpers with the other car and stopped moving. Press your horn, Reader. That's better. There's only two gears on these cars – high and low. And a maximum speed of 175 mph.



"And oh I say! What happened there? A rectangle with a few letters on it appeared, then disappeared, then Mr Reader's car went flying in the air. What on earth could that have been? Oh. Our technical advisers reckon that was a tram. Er...



"Apparently some viewers have complained of a jerky, slowly-updating picture. No, it's not a technical problem we're trying to sort out. It's supposed to be like that, unfortunately.

"Oh my goodness! A yellow cab pulled out in front of Mr Reader, and he veered to one side of it but still crashed. This is really most odd. I can't make head nor tail of it...

"And... well... yes, and it seems Reader has got through the first two stages but run out of time on the third. James Hunt is with him at trackside. Come in James..."

"Thank you Murray. Well, AA, what do you think of the race?"

"Well it was a load of tosh, wasn't it, really? It was all too slow and jerky. I was steering round objects and still crashing into them. And trams and other cars kept vanishing briefly at the worst moments. It did my head in.

"The most vital aspects of any race are speed and responsive controls. This one yelled out at me its total lack of either. The first two stages were dead easy – I finished both with ten seconds plus to spare. But it then got ludicrously hard. And practice is unlikely to make any difference, because it doesn't seem skill comes into it in a contest as lackadaisical as this one.

"The cars are really badly designed, all blocky. And the beep of my horn, which was supposed to get other cars out of the way, was so pathetic it nearly drove me mad. It takes a lot of effort to produce a race that is totally unengaging. So I suppose you have to admire someone's effort."

"Well there you have it Murray, straight from the horse's mouth."

Adam P

SECOND OPINION

"I liked it more than Adam did, but I didn't like it much. It's just too jerky and vague to cut it as a racing game, though the car sprite is nice and it's commendably faithful to the arcade version."

Rod Lawton



● You can beep your horn to (in theory) get the cars in front of you to move over. It's a pretty pathetic 'beep' though.



● 175mph in a built-up area? You'll have the police after you... oh, er, you are the police, aren't you...



● The backdrops do change as you race around the city, but the game is really all about the racing (unfortunately).



● Collisions with other cars won't always send you flying, but they will slow you down considerably.



● Are those skyscrapers by the side of the road. Er, at about four foot six, we suspect otherwise...

FIRST DAY TARGET SCORE

Get stuck on Level Three

CISCO HEAT VERDICT

GRAPHICS............ 63%
Is that a tram or a toasted waffle?

SONICS................ 40%
Irritating in-game tune and dodgy fx

GRAB FACTOR....... 62%
Looks at first glance like a reasonable racing game...

STAYING POWER... 34%
...then you find out the truth.

RATING 38%

Mirrorsoft has turned out some decent games recently. This isn't one of them.



Balrog

Yet another month in the adventure calendar drifts by as the Balg continues his quest to bring you all the latest news, reviews and clues from the world of adventure...

Clue-sniffing with the Balrog

Thanks to Pamela, Joan Pancott, Mark Wake, Steve Haddon, Ross Younger, Gwynne, Brendan 'Legolas' McGoldrick and Benjamin Lomax for this month's selection of clues...

Astral Plain
Other side of gate of hell: Examine coffin, open coffin with rod, get, examine and read staff, type "LIFE".

Castle Warlock
- The cupboard in the armoury is a lift, say "up" to go to next floor, but make sure you have the garlic as there is a vampire bat.
- In room of mirrors, pull curtain to find exit.
- To get the shield, stand on chair.
- To get gold key from cell drop chair to stop ceiling crushing you.
- When opening the chest in armoury make sure you are wearing the shield.
- Use the block of wood to jam spiked door in mirror room then slide mirror, go north and take key.
- In library, lift the table to get the music manuscript.

Cursed be the City
To stop sphere spinning, cast web around you, examine priest, take staff and wave it.

Crystal Theft
Cubicle Room: Get and examine blue pendant, get and examine green pendant, Nx2, get bronze key, Sx2, N, Sx2, E, N, drop green pendant (for score only, 100 points), Up, Sx2 (help at three doors tells you, Vegans are very fond of three stage sequential puzzles), unlock door, Nx3, S (note yellow picture), S, unlock door, N, W, unlock door, drop bronze key, S, get laser rifle.

Frankenstein
- To heal bullet wound, go to beach – Examine beach, take cake of salt and rub salt in wound.
- When you have climbed as high as you can go up the ice wall, drop pick to make it to the top.

Heroes of Karn
- Don't go south from the plain of stones without the money! To get the money, kill the barrowwight with the bible from the monastery.
- Kill the black knight with the acid, use the bottle to carry the acid.
- Kill the dragon with the sword and the hydra with the spear.

Lancelot
To get the harp from the mermaid: red knight, wait, sw (or any other direction), get harp.

Lord of the Rings
Hop on the white stallion in part two and go across the ford until the Black Riders are washed away. Tell the door, "Friend" to enter moria. Make sure you have the candle from part one.To get past the hobbit guard you must wear the ring and go west. Remove the ring once past the guard.

Lords & Ladies of Adventure

Bards Tale • Big Sleaze • Boggit • Caves '90 • Dragontorc • Forest at World's End • Hitchhiker's Guide • Hobbit • Jackle & Wide • Jewels of Babylon • Kobyashi Naru • Laser Squad • Lord of the Rings • Lords of Chaos • Lords of Time • Lost Phirious (parts 1 & 2) • Lurking Horror • Mindfighter • Mystery of the Indus Valley • Never Ending Story • Price of Magic • Quest for the Golden Egg-cup • Quill (+Illustrator) • Red Moon • Rigel's Revenge • Scapeghost • Seabase Delta • Shadows of Mordor • Souls of Darkon • Venom • Very Big Cave Adventure
Simon "Aragorn" Netherwood, 36 Toothill Bank, Rastrick, Brighouse, West Yorkshire HD6 3EZ. Tel: (0484) 719326 5-9pm weekdays, 12-11pm weekends.

Andy Capp • Price of Magic
The Kenderian, 475 Westhorne Ave, Eltham, London SE9 5LR.

Jewels of Babylon
Chris "The Barbarian" Gore, 22 St. Anthony's Pk., Mallow, Co. Cork, Ireland.

Aftershock • Colossal Adventure • Escape from Khosima • Gnome Ranger • Gremlins • Guild of Thieves • Haunted House • Hitchhiker's Guide • Ingrid's Back • Kingdom of Hamil • Leather Goddesses • Mindshadow • Mordon's Quest • Pawn • Price of Magic • Return to Eden • Rigel's Revenge • Scapeghost • Seabase Delta • Snowball, Sorceror • Village of Lost Souls
Robin Harley, 3 Shropshire Place, Eastgate, Peterborough, Cambs PE1 5BX.

Crispin Crunchy • Gnome Ranger • Message from Andromeda • Scapeghost • Simply Magic • Talisman of Power • Top Secret • Yarkon Blues.
Jay Honosutomo, 23 Tintagel Close, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP2 6NL. Tel between Mon-Fri, 4.30-9pm (0442) 242957

Deadenders • Gnome Ranger • Hitchhiker's Guide • Lancelot • Quest for the Golden Eggcup • Rigel's Revenge • Smashed • Venom
Richard Jamieson, 79 Land Street, Rothes, Aberlour, Banffshire AB38 7BB.

Aftershock • Football Frenzy • Gnome Ranger • Kentilla • Knight Tyme • Mega Bucks • Rigel's Revenge • Seabase Delta
Jon Bingham, 10 Cowslip Walk, Amblecote, Brierley Hill, West Midlands DY5 2QN.

Red Moon
To get past the dog, put pink pills in meat and give meat to dog.

Knightmare
At the start of the game, TAKE FOOD, GIVE FOOD, GIVE WATER, ASK OLD MAN, GET SPADE, OPEN DOOR. Move through the door to the next screen and DIG GROUND. When you reappear, run down, through to the next room.



● Can't get going in *Knightmare?* Here are some tips...

Scapeghost - Part 1
- To open the shed door: Tell Joe to wait three times and then push long lever, then tell Bert to wait twice and push the medium lever, then tell alex to wait once and push the short lever. Then type "Push Barrel".
- To enlist Alex Pym, hit the statue.

Theseus - Part 2
- To kill Chimera, throw lead in its mouth.
- Kill Gorgon with the head of the Medusa.
- Pray at altar to get sword blessed.

Wolfman
- To stop you killing the man at the bridge, wait seven times and then close eyes.
- Make sure you take the flower in the fields and when the hunter ambushes you eat it.

HELP!

If you're really desperate for help in an adventure and no-one else can help you then write to the Balrog at the usual address – if possible, enclosing some contributions for cluepot and just for laughs whilst you're at it!

Bard's Tale
John-Lee Barber from Brighton would like to know what the ring of power does?

Lancelot & Subsunk
Mrs J Constable is stuck in these two adventures – how does she kill the giant in *Lancelot* and how do you open the bottle of pills and get into the safe in *Subsunk*?

Shadows of Mordor
Mark Zelionka is stumped – do you have to kill Smeagol by sending him over the cliff with the tree? (What do you do if you don't?) Secondly, how do you cross the weed-infested swamp – he has made the raft but can get no further.

Dun Darach
Eilen Growes completed the game many moons ago but is now replaying it. Unfortunately, she has forgotten how to open the locked door in the Alchemist shop – can anyone help?

NEWS... NEWS... NEWS... NEWS... NEWS... NEWS...

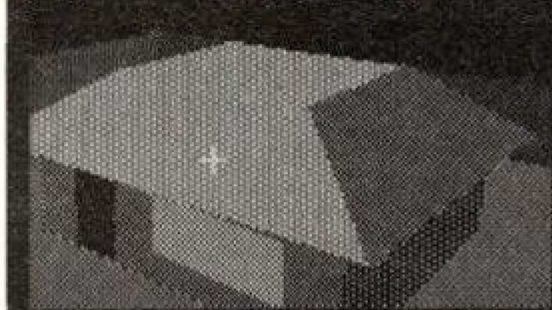
Plenty of news this month, due to the Adventure Probe convention in Birmingham. Get ready – there are loads of great games coming out soon...

Adventure Probe Results

The annual *Adventure Probe* awards were another boost to the Amstrad adventure market. Again, many Amstrad only adventurers were nominated, and here are the results:

● Most helpful PD Library
2nd Place Adventure PD (1st place went to a Spectrum PD library)

● Best Utility
2nd Place went to Incentive's *3D Construction Kit* (first place went to an Amiga package)



● *3D Construction Kit* scooped second place in the 'Best Utility' category in this year's *Adventure Probe* awards.

● Best text-only 8-bit adventure
1st Place went to Larry Horsfield's *Axe of Kolt* (review very soon!) whilst the second prize went to Ken Bond HBalg's *Spiro Legacy*.

● Best graphic/text 8-bit adventure
The first place went to a Spectrum adventure but 2nd place went to the PD *Eve of Shadows* by Rob Buckley and third place went to *The Hermitage* by Tony Colins.

● Best 8-bit RPG
Went to *Hero Quest*.



● *Hero Quest* was voted the year's best 8-bit role-playing game – a well-deserved win fo the excellent boardgame conversion.

● Most Helpful adventure house
Was awarded to Larry Horsfield's FSF Adventures.

● Most Promising Author
Was Bob Adams of *Grue-Knapped* fame.

● Honourable Member of Probe
Went to Joan Pancott HPilg for her contributions to the Amstrad adventure world.

Famous 5

Also at the convention, I talked to the Amstrad programmer of Enigma Variations' forthcoming *Famous Five* adventure – apparently it's nearly finished and if it's anything like the Sam Coupé version it looks like it'll be good. If any *Famous Five* fans are reading this (do people still read *F5*?) then you'll be pleased to hear that the game lets you control all the characters (bar Timmy the dog!) à la *Lord of the Rings* and it seems to hold true to Blyton's famous books.

Rob Buckley's latest

Butch Cowardice and the Undersea Adventure Is the name of Rob Buckley's newest game (his previous being the technically impressive PD game *Eve of Shadows*) which the Balg had a sneak preview of at the convention. Rob is still working away on the game but it is window-driven using a very impressive graphical interface. On top of this, Rob plans to use both sides of the disk – that'll be 360K of pure adventure! Watch out for it...

Adventure Probe Convention

The Balg would just like to say hello to all the Amstrad owners that turned up to the convention, including Joan and Maurice Pancott, Simon Avery, Jason Davis (thanks for the game Jason!), Bob Adams, Dave Harvard (who the Balg crushed in a vicious game of *Lords of Chaos*), Sue Roseblade (editor of the *Adventure and Strategy Club*), Dave Adams, Larry Horsfield, Peter Clarke, Tom Frost, Mandy Rodrigues, Debby Howard, Rob Buckley and loads of other people to numerous to mention – see you all next year!

Starship Quest converted soon

Starship Quest, follow-up to the brilliant *Magnetic Moon* (reviewed recently), will be ready soon, according to it's author Larry Horsfield. If it's anything like its predecessor then it will be a difficult but very good game...

Lost Dragon

Originally written last year on the Spectrum, *The Lost Dragon* is based on the first Adventure Probe convention and has you running around a hotel in Birmingham searching for... yep, you guessed it, said Dragon. Spectrum reviews have rated the game highly and the author Tom Frost is a very good adventure author, so the Balg looks forward to reviewing *Lost Dragon* soon!

Contacting the Balrog

To get in contact with the Balg, write to him at Amstrad Action, Future Publishing Ltd, Beauford Court, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, AVON BA1 2BW or e-mail at cazsjw@uk.ac.leeds.dcs.

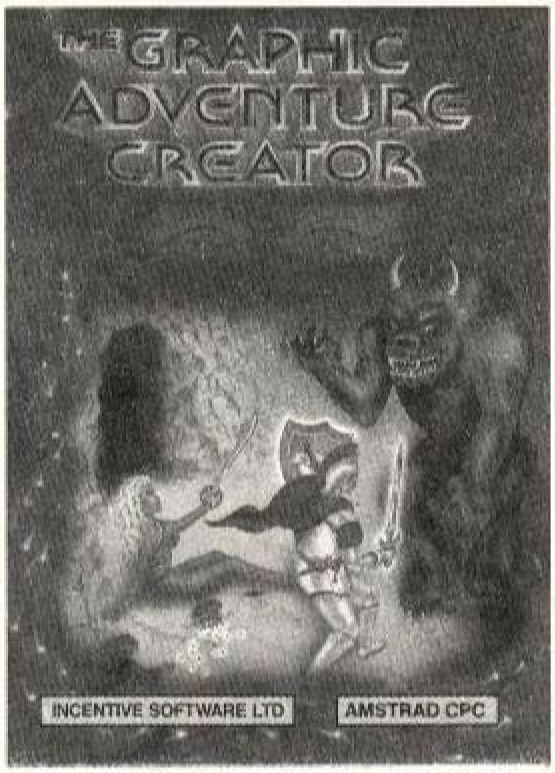
BALROG'S POSTBAG

Which Creator?

During the holidays I've got this sudden urge to write text-only adventure games. I've tried writing one in BASIC but I keep getting mixed up with all the input commands. I need a relatively cheap adventure creator as I only get £5 a month. I need it on disk. I know *Quill* is available on tape but is it available on disk?

Pervez Choudhury
Herts.

No sooner said than done, Pervez! Just transfer this month's covertape and – hey presto – GAC on disk!



● Fancy writing your own adventure? *Amstrad Action* proudly presents *Graphic Adventure Creator* on the covertape!

Tooken again...

I was recently approached by a sage specialising in the study of living/dead lifeforms. He claimed to be intrigued by the rumours coming from this tavern of one of its patrons speaking of a Balrog. Nicodromeanus (the sage) informed me that there was not a single account of a Balrog in any of the great libraries, not even Borania, the Wizard Isle.

So he has asked me for information, for knowledge, of the Balrog. Nicodromeanus asked if I knew of the 'appearance, size, colour, hobbies, intelligence, diet etc.' of the Balrog I had mentioned. He is willing to pay me 30 dozen stareyes and a contract of seven years in which he will assist me in any time I require knowledge for no fee. So, amicable Balrog, couldst thou reveal some snippets that I may tease the fool and still earn some profit.

Tooken Strange the Gnome
Illusionist to Xundra
Sharmhand of Guardby



● Don't ask about the Balg!

Appearance: Mean,
Size: Big,
Colour:Red/Black,
Hobbies: Adventuring
Intelligence: Considerable,
Diet: Small Gnomes who ask stupid questions...
(All Balrog readers are completely sane – honest!)

Balrog Adventure?

Why doesn't *AA* make an adventure game starring the Balrog?

Chris Morgan

See this month's GAC competition, Chris, and get coding!

Help needed

Has anyone out there got any tips or solutions for *Can I Cheat Death?*, *Welladay* or *Doomlords*?

Stuart

Stuart, you could always try the author, Simon Avery, who is a Lord of Adventure. His address is 71 Fore St, Chudleigh, Newton Abbot, South Devon TQ13 OHT. As always send a self stamped addressed envelope when dealing with the Lords and Ladies.

Please let us in on your secret!

I am having some difficulty with your rating system as compared with that in *Action Test*. I appreciate the need for distinction in the categories being assessed but whereas *Action Test* shows a clear weighting towards staying power in the overall rating, your overall rating bears no relationship apparently to the other defined factors.

Anon. Adventurer
(Name and address withheld for health & safety reasons)

Yes the rating system of the Balg is a little strange to people who don't know it! You see the overall rating is often heavily influenced by other factors outside the categories of Atmosphere, Challenge and Interaction – factors such as graphics, size of game, spelling, bugs, price etc. For example, Rob Buckley's Eve of Shadows and Ken Bond's Island both received very good overall ratings, partly due to the fact that the were both public domain and as such nearly free. On the opposite scale you might get a game which is really good but just too overpriced for what it is – such games might get a low overall rating. I hope this has cleared up the confusion for you!

Melbourne House address

Could you tell me the address of Melbourne House, or give me the name of someone who supplies *Kwah*?

Also could you tell me what happened to First Choice Software, the people you mentioned in *AA70*?

Chris Roberts
Wrexham

I'm not sure if Melbourne House is still around but the last address I had was at Virgin Mastertronic, which bought the company: 16 Portland Road, London W11 4LA. Tel: (071) 727 8070

As to 1st Choice, I got its telephone number out of AA68 but it appears that since then it no longer seems to be trading!

Fighting Fantasy

I noticed in your wonderful section in *AA71* a German reader asked for help with two adventures, *Rebel Planet* and *Seas of Blood*. Being a great fan of Fighting Fantasy novels (I have 31), I soon recognised these titles. I have only ever noticed FF titles for the BBC – are they any good and where I can get them from?

Mark Cocerdale
Oldham

The Fighting Fantasy games definitely did come out for the CPC, but as to their quality or who released them I'm not sure. I've got a feeling that a company called Adventure International used to sell them but I think it disappeared a long time ago – anyone know any different?

Gang War!

Are there any gang war games where you can battle with other gangs to control city blocks? Also, what do you think the best adventure game is?

John Grant
Hapeman

There are no gang war games on the Amstrad that I know of, although I have heard of such a play-by-mail game. As to my favourite adventure, I have two (I can't make up my mind which is the better!), Suspect and Lurking Horror, both created by a company called Infocom and both unfortunately no longer available.

No reviews?

Well, the Balg was planning to review *The Axe of Kolt* and *Helvera – Mistress of the Park* this issue but unfortunately the old disk drive finally gave up working. Sorry about the reviews, but I'd like to thank Mark Conmy for the loan of his 6128 – without it there would have been no Balrog column for the next two months either!



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RE-RELEASES... RE-RELEASES...



● Soldiers auditioning for the new *Rightguard* commercial.

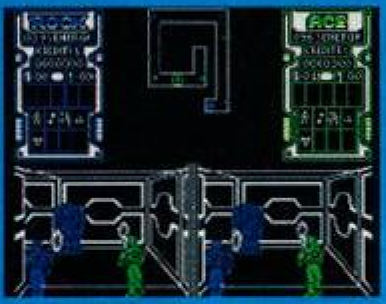
Operation Thunderbolt
Hit Squad ● £3.99

Killabunga! It's time to drag in a mate (don't worry, there's a one-player mode for people without any mates), line up them there crosshairs, stand by on the rocket button, and get ready to blast countless enemy soldiers and helicopters into pieces small enough to conceal in jam doughnuts. Mindless destruction has never been so much fun. **91%**

Switchblade
GBH ● £3.99

It's one of *AA's* games of the year, and it's dead cheap (and also available on the *Chart Attack* compilation, fact fans). You're a ninja sort of chappie, and you've got to explore this sort of warehouse. New rooms only appear on screen when you enter them. What do you reckon, Rod? "I think it's really good." There you have it. Conclusive. Buy *Switchblade*, Rod thinks it's really good. **93%**

Xybots
Hit Squad ● £3.99



The screenshot tells it all (well, most of it). *Xybots* is one of the daftest games of all time; a mediocre coin-op, converted as best as possible. It's a split-screen jobbie (for two-player action), you play a robot, there's money to collect and power-ups to buy, and loads of corridors to explore. At the end of the day though, it's a load of old nonsense. **37%**



● Don't bother following the arrow on the right. You can't move off the screen. Stand and, er, fight.



● We suggest a rapid movement to either left or right at this point. That's bird seed centre screen.



● "Ha, ha, you can't catch me!" Eat those apples. They do something. Probably. Or maybe not.

ROAD RUNNER
Hi-Tec • £3.99



● Ho, ho, ho. One of the animated intermissions. Ta-ra, Wile!



● Brrr. One fearsome son of a mother coyote, eh, readers?



● Hurrah! Our hero, a sort of cuckoo that goes "beep, beep".

"Beep, beep," as the telephone always says when you try ringing British Rail. It's also the clarion call of that daft bird with a haircut similar to the one most of our *Crap Haircut Compo* entrants want to see Adam P sporting. What's his name again? *Road Runner*, yeah that's it.

Hi-Tec is into cartoon characters in a big way. It got hold of the Hanna Barbera licence a couple of years ago, bringing out various Hanna Barbera character games (*Top Cat, Hong Kong Phooey*, etc), four of which are featured on a recent compilation. Now it seems they've come to a similar agreement with the Warner Bros Looney Tunes posse.

Road Runner (or *Road Runner and Wile E Coyote*, to give it its full name) is a game of two stages and eight levels. The first stage is a single screen jobbie (i.e. no scrolling), where Roadie moves from left to right, jumping every now and then.

Piles of bird seed appear on screen, and you have to peck away at them (using the Fire button) to gain the sustenance you'll need for stage two. Unfortunately, you are obstructed from doing this by all the nasties zooming round the screen.

Worms and clockwork mice whizz along the ground, clouds shoot lightning at you, and Wile E Coyote zips across the skyline hurling ten ton weights and cherry combs in your general direction. There are plenty of power ups, some better than others (avoid the circle with the 'T' on it at all costs!).

You have to survive with energy intact for a given time period (usually 90 seconds) to progress to stage two. This sees you running along a mountain path (à les cartoons) whilst Wile E chases after you on skis, wearing a rocket pack, or whatever.

This stage is totally easy. The only control at your disposal is Up (jump). You've just got to jump the obstacles Wile has left for you. These are very few in comparison to the number of power ups around.





● It's a list of all the power-ups. The extra lives appear shortly after the double jumps (high up).

Providing you pecked away at enough seed, you'll outrun the coyote easily and end up with loads more energy that you started with.

The other seven levels are the same, just a bit harder (bouncing armadillos in level three, etc). The problem is that you have to try and do everything with just one life. You get so little starting energy that you can't afford to die on a stage one (bearing in mind you should have gained loads of extra energy in the previous stage), otherwise you stand no chance.

The graphics are good, if a little dark, and the whole thing sticks very closely to the formula of the cartoons. But it gets repetitive very quickly, the gameplay is limited, and there's little impetus to try and progress in it. The sort of entity the word 'mediocre' was created for.

Rearrange the following – distinctly game, a, Runner, budget, is, Road, average

50% VERDICT



● Fact of the month: Road Runners are real birds. They eat invertebrates and live in SW America.



● Waaahey. Wile's got some sort of rocket pack now. Level Two, stage one – it starts getting hairy.



● That upside-down anarchy sign is a trap of some sort. You need to jump over it. Like we're doing.

SPIKE IN TRANSILVANIA

Codemasters • £3.99

Nur nur nur nur... Whoops, that's our Speccy port warning siren going off. Yep, it's time for some of those one-colour graphics and transparent sprites so loved by the easily-pleased. Mind you, we reckon the gameplay is several billion times more important than the graphics anyway.

Spike in Transilvania is an arcade adventure. Here at AA Towers we aren't all that good at Codies arcade adventures, to be honest. We consider it a major achievement if we actually manage to get off the starting screen in a Dizzy game. But *Spike* is no normal Codies arc-ad. No way, this one is e-a-s-y. We'd good as finished it within a few hours.

You play the role of Spike, a Viking of some import, and you've got to rescue your mates who've been locked up in some castle. No problem. So what makes *Spike* so easy?

Well for a start, you're allowed to carry up to six objects, so you can pick up anything you pass. (One of the main things that make *Dizzy* games so hard is that you need to be carrying a specific two objects to solve each puzzle.) The puzzles themselves are, with one notable (switchable) exception, very easy. It's obvious what each object is for, and you'll usually have the right thing (note singular) on you when you encounter each puzzle.



● Vikings are dead nasty people really, what with raping, pillaging, building Volvos, and all that stuff.



● Ghosts are usually quite nasty too. They go round scaring people and throwing vases around.



● P Griffiths and Russ certainly aren't nasty. Well, they might be we guess, we don't really know.

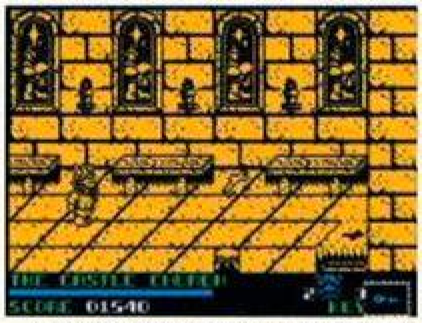
It's all quite competently done, and frankly we prefer games you can complete with a little thought to those you can only finish with a *Cheat Mode* solution or £50 worth of 0898 calls. Dizzy-hardened adventurers, though, will be annoyed at the lack of a long-term challenge (and the Spectrum graphics, of course).

Much easier than most Codies games (but then, maybe that's a good thing)

64% VERDICT



● Dungeons are definitely nasty places. People are forced to make false confessions then locked up.



● Most people think churches are quite nice. Henry VIII didn't – he went round burning them down



● Pools of toxic gunge are nasty as well. As any one who's gone swimming off Cornwall will know.

CARTOON COLLECTION

Codemasters • £9.99

That Dizzy thingie isn't the only Chrimbo compo from the Codies kids. There's another five game £10 cassette package also lurking there on the shelves. The *Cartoon Collection* consists of these five games:

Dizzy – the original game featuring that egg chappie. A bit primitive compared to later adventures, but still something of a collectors' item (though you've probably already collected it). **67%**

Little Puff – C64 and Speccy owners get something to do with elephants. We get this slightly wrinklie *Quattro Cartoon* resident. Guide your little dragon home. **70%**

Slightly Magic – (Reviewed last month) More dragons, and some wizardy things too. **73%**

Spike in Transilvania – (Reviewed above) **64%**

Seymour goes to Hollywood – (Reviewed in AA74) One of the best games of the year, and a new hero who's going to steal Dizzy's crown (remember – you read it here first). **92%**



● Seymour, of *Seymour goes to Hollywood* fame, is dead cool.

Five arcade adventure cute-em-ups. Four average, one brilliant.

73% VERDICT

RE-RELEASES... RE-RELEASES...

Chase HQ

Hit Squad ● £3.99



● *Chase HQ* is a most fine game. Dig that groovy flashing light, huh?

Guess what. You're a police person, you're in a car, you've got to chase and catch criminals (also in cars), ram them off the road (!), and then nick them. Set in Newcas... er, America, *Chase HQ* is one turbo-boostin' brother-in-law of a game. The digitised piccies and sarcy messages that appear during the proceedings merely add to the fun. **87%**

Turbo Out Run

Kixx ● £3.99

Whilst *Chase HQ* is a racing game with an extra dimension, *Turbo Out Run* is a race game with less dimension than a shop that doesn't sell shampoo. Leap into your Ferrari Testarossa and, er, well drive around as fast as you can without crashing into the other car too often. The arrival of *Out Run Europa* leaves this one standing sullenly on the start line waving a slightly chaffed asparagus. **49%**

Dragon Spirit

Hit Squad ● £3.99

Normally dragons are the things you'd expect to be charging towards, sword in hand. In *Dragon Spirit* you actually play one! You're flying high over the fantasy landscape, shooting at other dragons, pterodactyls, unicorns, and, er, well lots of things we haven't been able to identify yet. Competent, if predictable, coin-op convo. Domark's sold its back catalogue stuff to Hit Squad (Ocean). Fancy that. **73%**



● Dragonbunga! We're the blue chap, and none of the other chaps are our pals.



● Oh yeah, you can mock now, but we don't see you getting stuck in lads, do we?



● *Executioner*, they call him. Pah! Couldn't execute a three-point turn on a skateboard.



● Phut! Then again... *Pit-Fighter* is gory with a capital 'gory'. Time for a spot of hospital food.

PIT-FIGHTER

DOMARK ■ £10.99 cass, £17.99 disk

Aaaaaaaargh. Biff. Pow. Kersplatt. A punch. A kick. A throw. Blood sprays across the front three rows of the audience. Southside Jim tries to get to his feet, but Ty lays in with a knee to the stomach. Oof. "Go on, kill the get!" scream the crowd, as Ty starts to jump on Southside's head.

Jim struggles to his feet, picks up a crate and hurls it at the kick boxer. Kerspludge. Bits of Ty's head fly off into the auditorium, as the big man falls to the floor in a big mushy heap. "Ha, ha," laugh the crowd (not the most loyal of supporters), "go on Jim, my son, wipe the floor with the sappy nerd." Ty leaps to his feet, only to be felled again by an elbow to the chin. Scrabbling around on the ground, he picks up a knife...

Pit-Fighter is violent. The only way to see more blood is to get a mate to walk up to Arnie Schwarzenegger down your local pub and call him a "big girl's blouse."

Pit-Fighter compares to *Final Fight* in three important respects (aside from being a coin-op convo):

Firstly, you get a choice of three different heroes, each with their own fighting skills; Ty, the kick boxer (the hardest dude of the three), Buzz, an ex-wrestler (and a fattie to boot), and Kato, who's a karate kid type.

Secondly, the sprites. These are bigger than a very big thing, and the animation is as intricate as something out of a Disney film.

Thirdly, and finally, there's the variety of fighting moves. These include punching, kicking, jumping, ducking, picking up, throwing, cartwheels, and all sorts.

Unfortunately, those are just about the only similarities. Graphics are distinctly four-colour Speccy-port mode 1 sort of jobbies. Movement is slow. Gameplay is limited, with the action being confined to the same fighting area for each punch-up, though you can move around in all directions (and the arena is larger than a single screen in size).



There are lots of things lying around for you to pick up and bung at the opponent (crates, sticks, knives, etc). And if that gets boring, you can always pick up and throw the opponents themselves. There are eight opponents in all, together with 'grudge matches' after every two proper fights. (You can't lose any energy or lives in these, but you score points as usual.)

These opponents get harder as you progress. Or at least, their energy bars gets longer. You exchange blows till one or other of you runs out of said attribute. You do get four lives/continues, though.

And therein lies the problem. Limit yourself to only using the normal punches (nothing else seems to work anyway), and if you don't finish the game on your first go, you'll finish it on your second. (No exaggeration; yours truly came within a blob and a half of winning on go one, and had loads to spare when cleaning up on the second attempt.)

Defeat the last of the eight adversaries and what do you get? A big flash "well done" screen? The slogan "*Pit-Fighter* has been beaten" in big text? An opportunity to put your name in the all-time top ten? Nope. What you get is another of the bonus levels. Then what do you get? The computer tries to load a non-existent level nine. Sad but true.

There's a lot of things that are really good about *Pit-Fighter* (the size of the sprites, the cartoon violence, etc), but any game you can finish on your first go, without any reason at all to return to it, is a complete and utter waste of money.

Domark is making noises that it will be withdrawing from the 8-bit market after Christmas. If that proves to be the case, what a shame such an illustrious software house couldn't finish on a higher note than *Pit-Fighter*.

Adam P

FIRST DAY TARGET SCORE

Finish it and throw it away

SECOND OPINION

"It's slow, it's jerky and it looks dreadful. Frankly, it's hard to imagine anyone wanting to play it. Come on Domark, you can do better than this!"

Rod Lawton

PIT-FIGHTER VERDICT

GRAPHICS............ 68%
Nice big sprites, but limited colour and no variety.

SONICS................ 76%
Funky tune to massacre the opposition to.

GRAB FACTOR....... 72%
Pit-Fighter is initially appealing...

STAYING POWER... 00%
...but you'll finish it within an hour (guaranteed).

RATING 11%

The first thing you look for in a game is a challenge. You won't find a modicum of one here, though.



● Now this is a bit dodgy. You get bonus points for being extra nasty. Can't say we approve.



● Ha! We've grabbed Angel, and are about to throw her at a crate. Violenceabunga!

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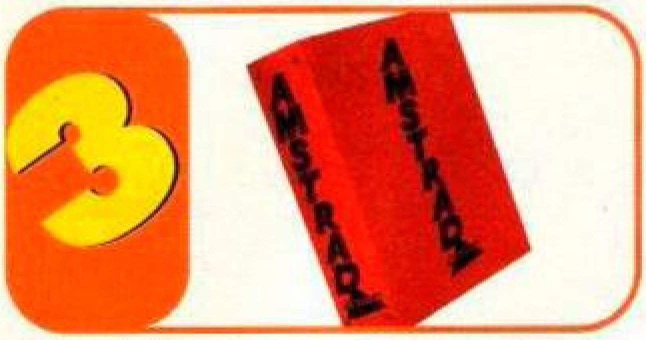
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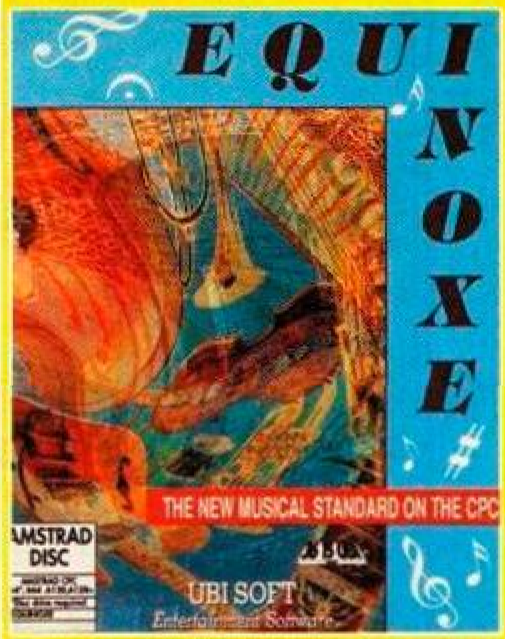


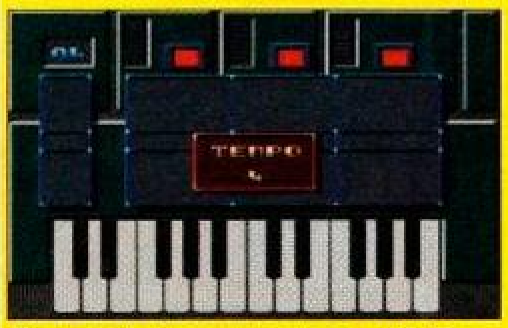
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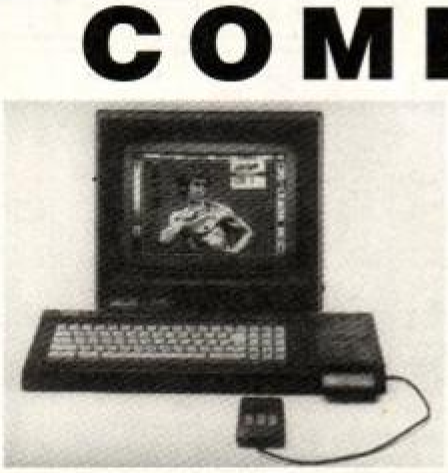
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Forum

Got a technical problem you can't sort out? This is the section for you – if *Amstrad Action's* consultant Tech Ed ADAM WARING can't solve it, one of our readers surely will! Write to: *Forum, Amstrad Action, Beauford Court, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW*. And don't forget to get in touch if you've got a techie tip for the rest of us. The best ones win a £25 voucher...

Transfer trauma

Q Have you any advice on copying the cover tape files to disk on an Amstrad CPC664?

I have loaded the tape from a cassette player and enjoyed it very much, but cannot save the file to disk.

The CPC664 is not mentioned on the tape label.

William Furnass
Kendal

A *The tape should be easily transferable to disk on the 664 using the same procedure that works on the other machines.*

The 664 is not mentioned, true, but that's because the proportion of owners of that machine is tiny compared to those who own the other machines. Rest assured, though, the tape should work on all Amstrad machines (except for the 6128 Plus, which has no built-in facility for loading from tape).

If you have problems transferring the tape to disk then you can always send off for a disk with all the programs already transferred, for barely more than the cost of a blank disk. See the cover tape pages for further details.

Plus points

Q I am the proud owner of a tape-driven 464 which I have loads of games for. I have had it for six years and have decided to buy a 6128 Plus early next year. Here's the problem: the 6128 has a built-in disk drive, but I have no games on disk! Is it possible to connect a data recorder to the 6128 Plus and load the games? Is it then possible to save them via the disk drive?

Stuart McNaughton
London



● Getting hold of a 6128 Plus may *seem* the answer to those tape trubs, but there are still problems in store.

A *'Fraid it's not quite as simple as that. There are a number of problems to face before you can get your software running from disk on a 6128 Plus.*

The first of which is that the 6128 Plus cannot connect to an external cassette recorder. There is simply no socket in which to plug one into! It is possible to have the computer modified, and having a tape loading facility put in, but that involves opening up the case and a bit of soldering, and of course that invalidates your guarantee.

And if that wasn't enough, it's by no means easy to transfer software from tape to disk. Commercial software often has some form of built-in protection with the express purpose of preventing you from copying software in this way. This is because the software houses are concerned that if it was easy to copy software it would lead to widespread piracy.

There are a number of utilities that will enable you to transfer tape software onto disk, but these programs are quite old and can't really cope with some of the more modern methods of program-protection.

Probably the best bet is to get hold of a Multiface II. This is a 'black box' that fits into the back of the computer and remains inactive until you press a button on top of the unit – this suspends the operations of the computer and the Multiface takes over. From here you can do a number of things, including saving the entire program to disk. Each Multiface has a special serial number built-in and you can only reload software on the same device that saved it. This is to prevent piracy!

There are several other advantages with the Multiface. You can save games mid-way – brilliant when you've got past the end-of-level nasty for the first time! You can also examine and hack around with the code – great for finding cheats for infinite lives!

You can't transfer multi-load games, though, because these programs expect to load in later levels from tape. And I bet you thought it was going to be easy!

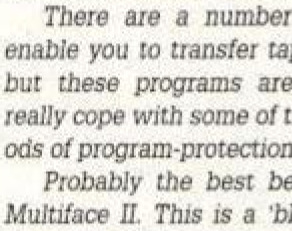
Transfer trauma

Q I have been buying your magazine for over a year now, so I thought it was time to write a letter and ask a few questions.

1. Is it possible to print out text in *Advanced Art Studio*.
2. Approximately how many clip art designs/drawings would you get on an extra clip art package such as *Extra Extra* for use with *Stop Press*?
3. IS *Extra Extra* the only extra set of clip art available?
4. I am writing a word processor and I would like to know if the printer 'Escape' codes are the same on most or all printers.
5. Is it possible to import all pictures designed on *Advanced Art Studio* into *Pagemaker Deluxe* (reviewed in *AA73*)?
6. Is it possible to import clip art to *Advanced Art Studio*. If so, are there any specific disks available.
7 Is it possible to use an AMX mouse with *Advanced Art Studio* or *Pagemaker Deluxe*?
8. Why didn't Amstrad fit the 6128 Plus with a cassette port or the 464 Plus with a tape counter?

I have written a little program to display pictures designed by *Basic Art* (*AA73*) without having load the *Basic Art* in the first place:

Assembler translation



While using the Hisoft *Devpac* assembler supplied with your cover tape I came across one small problem: how to type in listings that have been written with the *Maxam* assembler? After typing in a couple of listings I discovered that a few mnemonics had to be changed. They are:

Maxam	Devpac
WORD	DEFW
TEXT	DEFM
RMEM	DEFS
.LABEL	LABEL:**

(This refers to all labels. Note that they have to be six characters long or less.

Eric Clark
Torrens ACT
Australia

Thanks!



● **Need to get hold of some clip art pretty sharpish? If you're the creative type then you can design your own with *Art Studio*.**

```
10 MODE 0:INK 0,0:INK 1,26:INK 2,18:INK
   3,15:INK 4,6:INK 5,7:INK 6,2:INK 7,27:INK
   8,24: INK 9,16
20 LOAD "!picture"
```

Daniel Bettesworth
Dursley, Glos

That's a fairly mixed bag, Dan. Here goes:

1. Yes. Text can be added by clicking, surprisingly, on the 'Text' option.From there you have a number of options, such as Bold, Italics, Scaling. You can even redefine the character set for your own style of graphics.

2. It depends on the size of the pictures. The smaller they are, the more can fit on a screen and so on a disk – anything from 20 to 120!

3. By no means! Clip art is available from many sources. Goldmark Systems has several disks of clip art, and it's widely available from the CPC PD libraries.

4. Control codes are pretty standard for most printers. Things like bold, underline etc are the same on virtually all printers, it's only when you have 'clever' printers, such as colour models and the like, where you'd have unique control codes. Then again, I doubt that you'd want to use such fancy features in a word processor.

5. Yes. The program has the facility to convert screens – such as those produced by Art Studio, into clip art.

6. Art Studio can load clip art and import it into pictures.

7. Art Studio supports both AMX and Kempston mice. Pagemaker Deluxe doesn't, as yet, but the program is being continuously updated!

8. Who knows? It couldn't be because they're a bunch of penny-pinching... Nah!

No space



● **Getting line spacing right with *Mini Office II* using this handy hint.**

With reference to Adam Ross's enquiry about the *Mini Office II* word processor and line spacing, maybe the following will help:

The minimum line spacing is 1, but by sending the requisite control code to the printer, you can make that 1 equal to 0. Epson-compatible printers accept the control sequence 'f1,27,65,n' to control the size of line spaces. (Pressing the 'f1' key produces the control code character (^), meaning the list of numbers following should be interpreted as control codes.) Thus 'f1,27,65,0' gives a line spacing of zero.

Here's another hint for those having trouble underlining with the word processor. The printing code for underlining gives a line that is half-a-dozen characters longer than the words to be underlined because it also underlines the control codes.

Try this instead:

```
This is a headline↑,27,65,1
______________↑,27,65,12
```

Which comes out as:

<u>**This is a headline**</u>

Don't forget that the '^' character is produced with the 'f1' key!

P Rogerson
Mansfield

Thanks for the tip!

PC games on a CPC?

I have an Amstrad CPC6128 and my Mum has an Amstrad PC. I would like to buy a 3.5 inch disk drive to use on my 6128 and I would like to find out if I can use games and programs from the PC on my computer,

Gordon Field
Cheltenham

'Fraid you'll have no luck with games, Gordon. The two machines are entirely different in the way they work and the programs will just be garbage.

You can transfer data, such as text, though. For this you'll need to get hold of a PC transfer program such as 2 in 1 which we reviewed in AA61. It's available from Microstyle, Dept AA, 28 Belmont Avenue' Low Moor, Bradford BD12 0PA. Tel 0274 602180.

Career opportunities

I have an Amstrad CPC6128 which, as I am hoping to start a career in writing, I need to turn into a word processor. I obviously need a printer – could you recommend one that's not too pricey?

I also own the *Stop Press* desktop publishing program. Would this work as a word processing program for my purposes? Also do you know of any self-teaching word processing courses for the Amstrad as I cannot find one anywhere.

C R Moulding
Swindon, Wilts

There are so many printers available at different price levels. It really is a case of 'you get what you pay for'. More expensive printers have better features.

The lowest-cost printers are 9-pin dot matrix printers. These can start from as little as around £140, for a Citizen 120D, for example. Spend a bit more and you'll get better quality printout, faster speed and so on.

9-pin printers are find for producing rough drafts, but if you want your written words to impress, then a 24-pin printer may well be a better bet. These use more dots to make up the image of the characters you print. The result is crisper, more solid-looking, and more readable text. We had a Buyers' Guide to printers in issue AA74, check it out for what suits your needs best.

One more piece of advice when buying printers – shop around! Ignore the manufacturers' recommended prices. Printers are notorious for being sold at a discounted price. You'll probably get a better deal via mail order than by shopping locally. Check out the ads in AA for some bargains!

Stop Press is a great program and does what it's designed to do very well – which, unfortunately, is not word processing. Sure, you can make your work look very presentable with pretty pictures and whatever, but for banging out copy I really think you'd be better off with a proper word processor. Besides, once you've finished writing it's easy to then import the text into Stop Press and do pretty things with it then.

We use Protext in the AA office – it's very quick and easy to use and ideal for those who write a lot of text. Other contenders include Brunword which has a built-in dictionary – useful if your spelling's not too hot, and Mini Office II which contains a whole selection of other programs with it and is dead cheap.

You don't really need a course to learn how to use a word processor. A couple of hours at the keyboard with the manual and you'll have got to grips with the basics. Once you've learnt how to save your work to disk, it's just as easy as using a typewriter. Good luck with the writing!

Colourful advice

I went down to the shop from where I purchased my 6128 Plus to ask their advice on printers. I was disappointed to hear that the Star LC200 will near enough not work on the Amstrad. I want to print colour pictures. The man in the shop said that the 128K on the Amstrad is not enough and it would be virtually impossible to do this. Is this true?

I have seen many adverts in your magazine

for things like *Colourdump 2* so you can print out in 16 colours on the LC-200 or compatible. Is this true? If you can print out colour pictures on the LC-200 is it easy to do or is it very complicated to set up? I hope you can help me.

A Kelly
Manchester

The man in the shop is a complete buffoon, you'll be pleased to hear! All this about not having enough memory to print in colour is utter nonsense. Buy an LC-200 along with Colourdump 2. You'll be able to print out pretty colour pictures with ease!

Double drive

Could you help me with a small problem. I use *Ramdos* with my 3.5-inch second drive. Is it possible to use a PEEK to see which drive I am using, or a POKE which will put me on drive A or B? I want to use it in a database program I am using.

I use *Tasword* and find I could not run it from drive B as the loader reverts to drive A all the time. The following listing will overcome this. First you must transfer TASWORD.BAS, TASCODE.BIN and TASCODE3 to drive B. Now run the listing, which will save TASCODE1.BIN to drive B.

```
10 MEMORY 6399:LOAD"TASCODE1"
20 POKE 6754,32
30 POKE 6755,32
40 POKE 6768,32
50 POKE 6769,32
60 POKE 6782,32
70 POKE 6783,32
80 |B
90 SAVE"TASCODE1",b,6400,14080
```

You can now run *Tasword* from drive B – handy if you have all that extra disk space!

Ron Rose
London

I don't know of a way to check which drive is being accessed, offhand, but if somebody does I'm sure they'll put us out of our misery!

It's a screen!

Please can you help me! My son has an Amstrad CPC464 with a 64K ram pack. The problem is we have *Advanced Art Studio* on tape. The manual that came with it is for disk.

We can load side one without problems, but it's side two that's causing us difficulty. It says 'screens' on the back. In the manual it says load filenames but I don't know what they are – it doesn't say in the manual.

Has anyone else had this problem before or is it just me?

Wendy Bellwood
Leominster, Herts

Side two of the tape actually contains pictures – you can load these into Art Studio to look at them.

First load the program normally. Go to the 'file' menu and select 'Load File'. Turn the tape over to side two and press Play. The pictures will then load in.

What's the answer?

I only have a couple of questions to ask you.

1. How do you get a program to print a question (using data), allow you to type the answer in, display whether you're right or wrong, then go onto the next question?
2. Do you need special programs or hardware to program hardware sprites?

Richard Redford

Basically, you need to check the answer that's been input against the correct answer and get the computer to make a decision based on that. Here's a little listing that does just that:

```
10 READ q$,a$: IF q$="*" THEN PRINT "The
   end!":STOP
20 PRINT q$:input x$
30 IF UPPER$(X$)=a$ THEN PRINT "Right
   again!":GOTO 10
40 PRINT "Wrong, bozo!":GOTO 10
50 DATA "What's the best computer mag
   around?","AA"
60 DATA "What's the longest single-span
   suspension bridge in the world?","HUMBER"
70 DATA "What consists of pastry, currants and
   icing?","BUNS"
80 DATA "*","*"
```

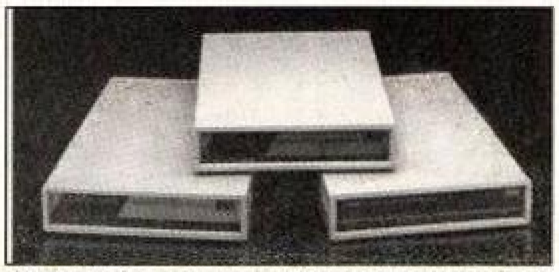
The IF statement in line 30 takes you answer, converts it into capital letters, and compares it with the real answer.

Hardware sprites are built into a computer's graphics chip. Basically they can be moved around by sending a couple of commands to the chip and letting it get on with it, rather than writing a program specifically to display the sprites. The Amstrad has no facility for hardware sprites,though.

Take it into account

I want to se my CPC6128 to access the Bank of Scotland's *Home Office Banking Sysytem*. I require a suitable modem and a compatible communications package.

Assuming that the 6128 is capable of accessing Viewdata (i.e. Videotext) networks, could you suggest the appropriate hardware and software I need. The following settings are required:



• Manage your money without trudging down to the bank. Getting on line requires a modem, an RS232 interface and a phone socket

Baud rate: 2400/2400 or 1200/1200 or 1200/75 or 300/300
Data bits: 7
Parity: Even
Stop bits: 1

Is the communications package in *Mini Office II* compatible?

P G Richards
Carnock, Fife

There are a wide variety of modems available ranging from under £100 to many times that amount. The protocols you describe are quite flexible, and so pretty much any modem you purchase will be suitable.

Before you can plug a modem in, though, you'll need to get hold of an RS232 interface. The Amstrad doesn't have one built in as standard, and you'll need to spend around £50 or so on one. Check out the adverts. Actually, most RS232 interfaces have built-in communications software on ROM, in which case there's nothing else you need.

Picture printing

I've just got one quick question: is it possible to print out my drawings that I've created on the *Smart 2* art program you gave away on the *AA74* cover cassette?

Richard Clark

The program has no facility to print out pictures. To do that, you need to use a separate program that produces a screen dump.

The last one we printed in AA was Bigdump, in AA66. It produces screen dumps for Epson-compatible printers (ie most of them) in 15 shades of grey scale.

Switch off

I have a 464 with a 6128 ROM installed and a disk drive. I've been thinking of buying a DK'Tronics 64K memory expansion and have a few questions:

1. Can I use any programs that are made for the 6128?
2. It says that bank switching is done by software that comes with the expansion. Do I have to load it in before I can load a game that requires 128K?
3. The software comes on cassette for the 464 and disk for the 6128. Can I get a disk version because I dislike loading from tape?

Daryl Tripp
Nuneaton, Warks

1. Yes. By adding a 64K memory expansion you'll by completely 6128-compatible. You'll be able to run 128K-only programs like Art Studio and all those lovely games that make use of the extra memory.
2. No. The bank switching software is intended for use in your own BASIC programs. Machine code programs, such as games, that use the full 128K will have their own routines to switch between memory banks.
3. You should be able to easily transfer the software onto disk, thereby only having to load it from tape the once. **AA**

AA SMALL ADS

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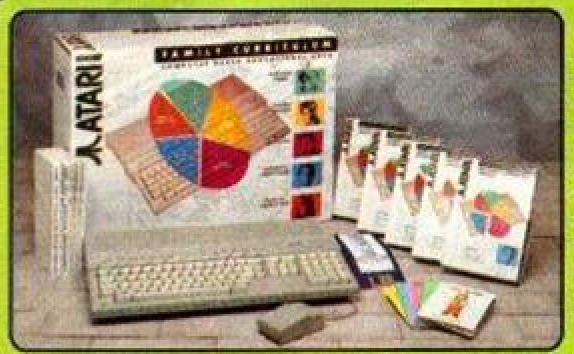
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THAT WAS THE YEAR

1991 War in the Middle East, the release of the Birmingham Six, German unification and Adam Waring's birthday – 1991 was certainly a year to remember. Here are the highlights...

JANUARY: The year opens somewhat less than encouragingly, with wars, both civil and international, in the offing. Hostilities in the Kuwaiti Oil War reach full conflict in the middle of the month. Iraq fires scores of Scud missiles at Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, slightly injuring two Israelis. The West responds with a campaign of carpet-bombing (hiding bombs under carpets in Saddam Hussein's palace), President Gorbachev sends troops in to crush the national uprising in Lithuania and Rod introduces compulsory tea-making for all junior editorial staff. *AA* selects its games of the year for 1990.

FEBRUARY: The IRA fires a mortar at 10 Downing Street. But, in an embarrassing mix-up, their fix-it man mistakenly loads the cannon with brick-building cement (think about it) and John Major survives. President De Klerk lifts some of the apartheid restrictions in South Africa. Blacks are now allowed to wear hats and stay up after 6pm. Meanwhile, it's tears ahoy at AA Towers as veteran art bod Ollie Alderton moves over to *Commodore Format*. It's not all bad news though, as James Leach leaves too. Paul (Captain) Morgan steps into Ollie's shoes (for a bet).

Fave games of the year



ROD LAWTON

1) LOTUS ESPRIT TURBO CHALLENGE (Gremlin) Brilliant one or split-screen two-player racing game that features loads of circuits, good response and a hefty dose of realism. Addictive, tough and generally excellent.

2) SWITCHBLADE (Gremlin) Absolutely giant platform explore/beat-em-up with mammoth playability and loads to see and do.

3) SUPERCARS (Gremlin) What, another Gremlin game? It's true. Addictive little *Super Sprint* style romp with loads of circuits and upgradable cars. Gremlin has done wonderful stuff with mode 1 graphics this year – wonderfully detailed visuals and no blocky sprites.

MARCH: The gulf war ends, and is hailed as a "victory for democracy". The Birmingham Six are released after serving 26 years in prison and the Kuwaiti royal family return to Kuwait and start killing people. Unrest in Yugoslavia escalates, and there are riots in East Berlin as the two Germanys unite. Scot Frank O'Connor wraps his worldly goods in a handkerchief and sets off down south in search of fame and fortune, but somehow ends up at *AA* instead.

APRIL: The Kurds rise up against Saddam Hussein, and end up a few days later on top of a hill waiting for American aid. Kitty Kelly writes a nasty book about Nancy Reagan. Pit-bull terriers go on the rampage across Britain. *AA* launches a regular monthly covertape to universal acclaim.

MAY: Indian president Rajiv Gandhi is assassinated during an election campaign, and consequently doesn't win. The Hacienda club in Manchester is closed after some people turn up one Friday night with shotguns. Korean students have one of their regular riots. It's Mozart's 200th Birthday. A big party is held in New York, but the selfish get doesn't turn up. *Silence of the Lambs* hits the big screen, but *Amstrad Action* is bowled over by *Terminator 2, F-16 Combat Fighter, BAT* and *Switchblade*.

JUNE: Margaret Thatcher visits Russia, South Africa and America. No-one has the heart to tell her she isn't Prime Minister any more. Boris Becker and Steffi Graff win Wimbledon. Adam Waring leaves AA to start up *Public Domain* magazine. No-one notices. James Leach (now working for Speccy mag *Your Sinclair*) buys a big red shiny Escort XR3i.

Fave games of the year



ADAM PETERS

1) SMASH TV (Ocean) Simply the fastest, most frantic shoot-em-up of all time, and still an office favourite. Even if that Lawton chap has notched up a pretty unassailable score (292,520).

2) SEYMOUR GOES TO HOLLYWOOD (Codemasters) This little blob (even the Codies don't know what he's supposed to be) is going to blow Dizzy away. Seymourabunga!

3) EDD THE DUCK (Impulze) Well it's a pretty average platform game really, but Edd the Duck is the single greatest person on the planet. I've got Edd the Duck wallpaper, bed sheets – the lot. (*Oh dear – ed.*)

JULY: Bryan Adams goes to Number One in the charts. There are calls to tax the queen. Frank O'Connor leaves *AA* to devote more time to perfecting his Sean Connery impression (we advised 200 years).

AUGUST: Bryan Adams is still Number One, but British hostage John McCarthy is released after five years in captivity and everyone cheers up again. The Bank of Commerce and Credit International (BCCI) is found to have spent all the money deposited in it on big dinner parties. The bank crashes and lots of people lose loads of cash. *Terminator 2* comes out. A new *Pizza Hut* opens in Moscow. Adam Peters joins *AA*.

SEPTEMBER: Bryan Adams is still Number One and there is a coup in Russia, but it's a dead crap one which doesn't work. The new craze in Britain











is "hotting" (ie doing stunts in stolen cars). In Birmingham an electricity sub-station is torched. In Newcastle two social security offices are burnt down. Other uprisings occur in Cardiff, Oxford, and outside the Post Office in Chignall Smealy. Adam P stages a one-man sit-in at the pub. No-one notices.

OCTOBER: U2 go to number one in the charts. Bring back Bryan Adams, pleads the British public. Civil war breaks out in Yugoslavia. Elizabeth Taylor has her annual marriage. Director of Public Prosecutions Sir Alan Green is nicked doing naughty things. Australia beats England in the Rugby World Cup final (gets). *Amstrad Action* is six years old!

NOVEMBER: Robert Maxwell falls off a boat. The Philippines is flooded. Terry Waite is released from hostagedom. Freddie Mercury dies. Adam waring gets a yo-yo. "Hotting" reaches Bath, but James Leach forgets to use a stolen car, and drives his own XR3i into a chest freezer, totalling the vehicle completely (send donations to the James Leach New Car Appeal, c/o *Your Sinclair*).

DECEMBER: *Silent Night* and *Bohemian Rhapsody* compete for Christmas number one. The violence in Yugoslavia continues, as the United Nations struggles to reach a settlement. The AA staff are arrested after posing as small children in the Santa's grotto of a local Debenham's store.

Fave games of the year



ADAM WARING

1) TURRICAN 2 (Rainbow Arts) Huge levels, brill graphics and more violence than World War II and the *Star Wars* trioligy put together. *Turrican 2* is the roughest, toughest shoot-em-up ever seen!

2) PANG (Ocean) Console only, but what a stunner! Brilliant conversion that shows what the extra hardware's capable of. Slick gameplay, loads of levels and a two-player mode make for a cart that can't be missed!

3) CHIP'S CHALLENGE (US Gold) 144 screens packed with brain-teasing puzzles that really get your grey matter going. There's just so much to it, you can't help but keep on coming back for more.

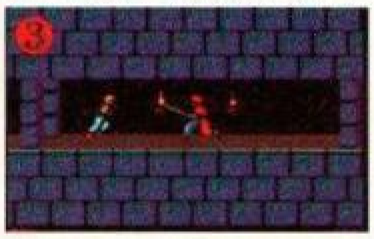
Amstrad Action's top 30 games of 1991...



SMASH TV Ocean



TURRICAN 2 Rainbow Arts



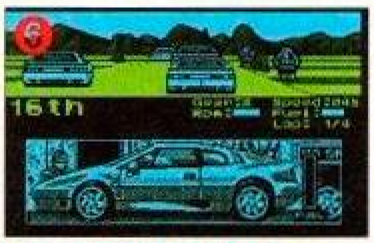
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ROBOCOP 2 Ocean **[console]**



SWITCHBLADE Gremlin **[console]**



LOTUS ESPRIT TURBO CHALLENGE Gremlin



PANG [console] Ocean



FINAL FIGHT US Gold



F-16 COMBAT PILOT D.I.

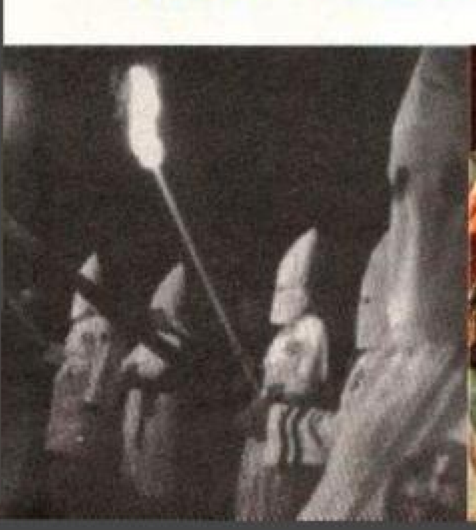
TOP 10 ▲



SEYMOUR GOES TO HOLLYWOOD Codemasters

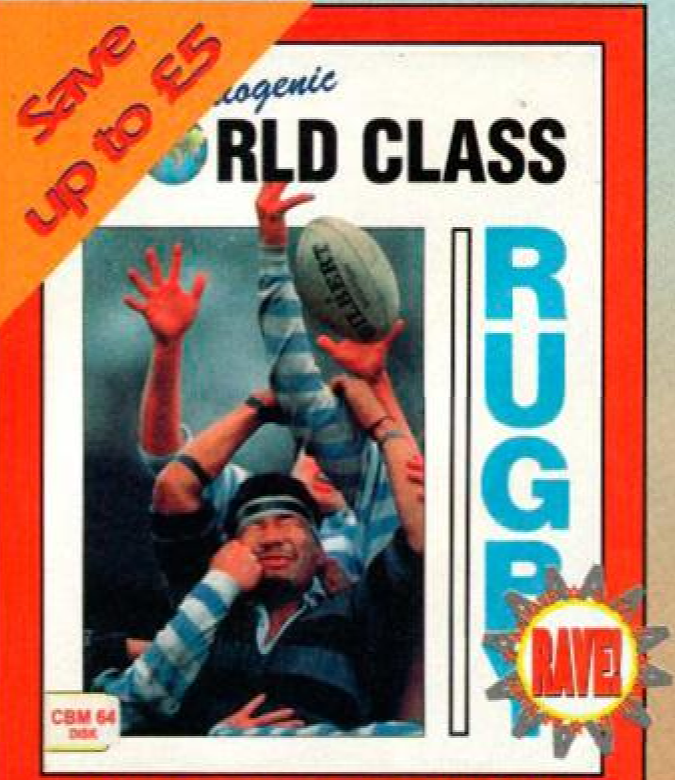
11) SCOOBY DOO & SCRAPPY DOO
12) NORTH & SOUTH
13) HERO QUEST
14) TOTAL RECALL
15) BAT
16) TURTLES 2 – THE COIN-OP
17) SWITCHBLADE (tape/disk)
18) SHADOW DANCER
19) TERMINATOR 2
20) GAZZA 2 (console)
21) NAVY SEALS (console)
22) BOOLY
23) LOOPZ
24) SUPERCARS
25) WORLD CLASS RUGBY
26) CHIP'S CHALLENGE
27) ROBOZONE
28) BUILDERLAND
29) MAGIC LAND DIZZY
30) NIGHTSHIFT

THAT WAS 91





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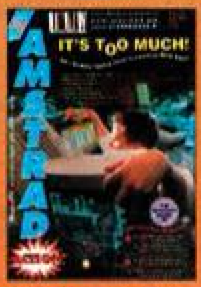
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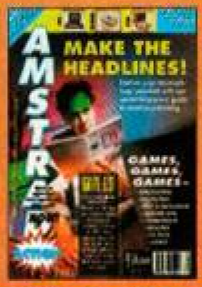
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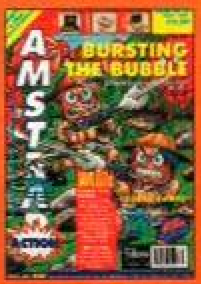
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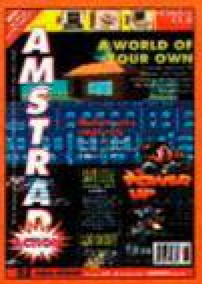
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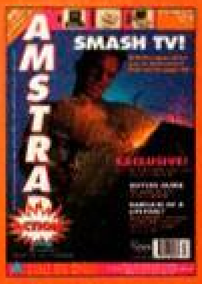
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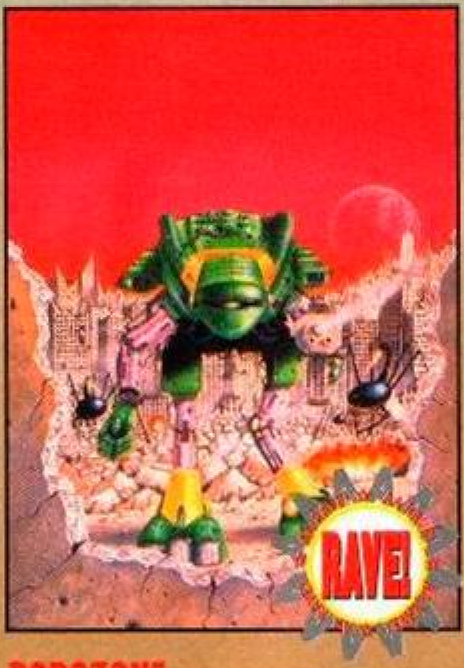


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Mastering m



Christmas greetings everybody! Hi Santa! This month's instalment will be of great interest to those eager readers who have stacks of games and wish to complete at least one of them! Also, we take a look at a few of the more delicate operations. ANDY PRICE shows you the way of the assembler...

Anybody for Boolean algebra? Even I wouldn't be so cruel, even though I have done it for my degree (*show off – ed*). However, it would be useful to have a look at **AND** and **OR**. With that knowledge, we can write routines to move multiple sprites around the screen and even on a backdrop! That is the subject of next month's instalment...

Very Andy

Firstly, it would be helpful to have a look at the **AND** operation. The screen diffusion program a couple of issues ago used this instruction.

Basically, the result from **AND**ing two inputs together is 1 only if both inputs are 1, where 1 is when the bit is set and 0 when the bit is reset. Hence, we can summarise this in the form of a 'truth table':

TRUTH TABLE FOR THE **AND** GATE

Inputs		Result
A	B	C
0	0	0
0	1	0
1	0	0
1	1	1

To **AND** a register with the accumulator, use the following format:

`AND r`	AND register r with the accumulator.
`AND 0`	AND value 0 with the accumulator.
`AND (HL)`	AND the contents of memory address with accumulator.

Similarly, with the **OR** operation, the output is 1 if any of the inputs are 1:

TRUTH TABLE FOR THE **OR** GATE

Inputs		Result
A	B	C
0	0	0
0	1	1
1	0	1
1	1	1

To **OR** a register or value with the accumulator, use these instructions:

`OR r`	OR register r with the accumulator.
`OR 0`	OR value 0 with the accumulator.
`OR (HL)`	OR the contents of memory address with accumulator.

Right now you must be thinking to yourselves, "what use is all this **AND**ing and **OR**ing then?" Well, to do anything at all with even a small degree of complexity at machine code level, you will need to use at least one of these instructions. To give you an idea on how, have a look at the screen diffusion program in *AA73*. Bear in mind that for the instalment on sprites next month you will need to understand these instructions (or at least try to).

Moving blocks of memory

I have just had a letter from Mr Cyborg of the satellite Ganymede who says that I am a rampant nutter and I never read his letters. True, I can't read Martian (except after a cup of coffee!).

Anyway, to move blocks of memory here, there and everywhere, we use the **LDIR**, **LDI**, **LDDR** or **LDD** instructions. These instructions save us the trouble of moving data address by address. Below is an explanation of each of the instructions and for a demonstration of them in action, see **Listing 2**.

`LDIR`	**HL** holds the address of the data to be moved **DE** holds the destination address **BC** contains the number of bytes to move

HL and **DE** are incremented and **BC** is decremented. This instruction is executed repeatedly in a loop until **BC** equals zero.

`LDI`	Same as **LDIR** except it is not a continuous loop. The only difference being that the Parity/Overflow flag is reset if **BC=0**. The **JP PO,address** instruction can then be used to jump to an address if **BC=0**. However, it is easier to use the LDIR instruction.
`LDDR`	Same as **LDIR** except **DE** and **HL** are decremented.
`LDD`	Same as **LDI** except **DE** and **HL** are decremented.

Bearing these explanations in mind, it would be wise to use the LDIR or LDDR instructions as these are simpler and more compact. All four methods are demonstrated for you in **listing 2**, just in case!

Poking around

The topic of game poking has aroused great interest over the years. However, game protections are becoming increasingly more complex (say hello to Mr Looker everybody!), which means that there are only a couple of people around who have the capability of writing those *Cheat Mode* cheats for the latest games.

For those of you who use *Cheat Mode*, my name must be familiar to you (*cor, wot a flamin' big-head – ed*). I only write cheats for the very latest games with these very complex protections which means I can only write a few cheats every month (these things take time you know!).

However, for those of you with a Multiface II, entering pokes is easy. You just press that red button and enter the address and poke. Those without such a device have to resort to the standard poke listing. If you do own a Multiface, how about finding your own pokes?

Multiface magic

To poke games using your Multiface you only need one more thing to make it practical to do so... *The Insider* or *Tearaway*. Both of these utilities allow you to search your computer's memory and perform nefarious operations. However, I will use *The Insider* for this exercise.

Firstly, what instructions do you look for in a game to find those infinite lives? Surprisingly enough, if you have been following this series, you already know them!

Devpac users

If you've got a copy of Devpac from the *AA71* covertape, you can use the listings on these pages directly. To get to grips with the program properly, though, you may want to take advantage of Hisoft's special offer on the Devpac manual (which we couldn't covermount!). Send a cheque or postal order for £9.95 to: **Devpac Manual Offer, HiSoft, The Old School, Greenfield, Bedford MK45 5DE.**
The price includes postage and packing.

Code & Chips

Got any machine code queries? Things you don't understand? It doesn't matter how stupid the question, how basic your knowledge, write to:

CODE & CHIPS
AMSTRAD ACTION
BEAUFORD COURT
30 MONMOUTH STREET
BATH
AVON BA1 2BW

achine code

Press that red button

The knowledge you need to find a game poke can be almost none. All you need is the information given here. However, the knowledge needed to get past a protection system needs to be vast, and that information has to remain a secret (sorry folks)!

The instructions needed for the majority of game pokes are:

Type A:

```
LD A,lives     ; loads A with the number of
               ; lives and stores it at
LD (add),A     ; an address. Change the number
               ; of lives here!
```

Type B:

```
LD A,(add)     ; This series of instructions gets
               the lives from
DEC A          ; an address and decreases it.
               Replacing DEC A with
LD (add),A     ; NOP will give you infinite lives!
```

Poking – the rule for success

To find that elusive poke for infinite lives – changing the routine which decrements them – I have one rule which I always follow:

- Find where the game stores the number of lives. Then, and only then, find the routine which decrements that address.

If you follow this rule, not only will you save yourself a lot of time but you will save yourself a lot of unnecessary work too. Using this rule, I can normally find a pokes for a game in about 40 seconds, no matter if it's *Final Fight* or *F-16 Combat Pilot* – the games follow the same pattern.

This is not so protection wise, so I am afraid that due to some law in this country called copyright, I cannot tell you how to get past protection!

LISTING ONE

```
    ORG #9000
    ENT $

    ; Listing One
    ; MEMORY MAP Program
    ; Programmers Toolbox - Code Macro 3
    ; Uses AND, OR and XOR logic gates and
    ; shows what can be achieved with this
    ; series!
    ; ANDY PRICE - "The Whirling Cyclone"

    LD A,1
    CALL #BC0E
    LD HL,#0000         ; start address for list of
                        ; addresses
    LD DE,#1000         ; increment for addresses

PRINT_ADDRESS:

    LD A,H              ; print address down left
                        ; of screen
    CALL HEX            ; print high byte (#00 to
                        ; #C0)
    XOR A
    CALL HEX            ; print low byte (#00, to
                        ; make #0000 etc)
    LD A,"-"
    CALL #BB5A
    ADD HL,DE
    LD A,H
    CP #D0              ; hl reached #D000?
    JR Z,MES            ; yes, final message
    LD A,#0D
    CALL #BB5A          ; carriage return
    LD A,#0A
    CALL #BB5A
    CALL #BB5A          ; move cursor down two
                        ; lines
    JR PRINT_ADDRESS    ; repeat loop until hl
                        ; reaches #D000

MES:
    PUSH DE
    LD DE,STRING
    CALL OUTSTRING
    POP DE

PLTMEM:
    LD HL,0             ; start of memory
    LD DE,#C00B         ; start of memory map box
                        ; (in screen memory)

MEM:
    PUSH HL
    LD HL,#800
    ADD HL,DE
    LD (LINE),HL        ; next pixel row on memory
                        ; map box
    POP HL
    LD B,65             ; number of bytes across
                        ; the memory map box

LOOP:
    LD A,(HL)           ; the current byte in
                        ; memory to map
    INC HL
    LD C,A              ; store A in C
    LD A,(HL)           ; load A with next address
    INC HL
    INC HL
    INC HL              ; increment address 3 more
                        ; times
    AND C               ; AND C with A to determine
                        ; whether location
                        ; is empty or occupied.
                        ; ANDing an empty
                        ; location with another
                        ; location, no matter
                        ; what the location holds,
                        ; produces no output
                        ; thus a blank pixel is
                        ; plotted on the memory
                        ; map.
                        ; IF BOTH LOCATIONS ARE
                        ; OCCUPIED THE RESULT OF
                        ; THE 'AND' IS POSITIVE
                        ; (SET) AND A COLOURED
                        ; PIXEL IS PLOTTED ON THE
                        ; MEMORY MAP SCREEN.
    LD (DE),A
    INC DE
    DJNZ LOOP
    LD DE,(LINE)
    LD A,(COUNT)        ; if all rows have been
                        ; plotted then the
    DEC A               ; memory map is complete
                        ; and count=0.
    OR A
    JP Z,#BB18          ; if this is so, exit
                        ; memory map program and
    LD (COUNT),A        ; wait for keypress ELSE
                        ; put decremented value
    LD A,D              ; of count back into memory
                        ; location count
    CP #C1
    JR NC,HERE
    XOR #C8             ; for XOR, the output of
                        ; two inputs is 1 if
    LD D,A              ; one or the other input is
                        ; 1 but NOT BOTH
    PUSH HL
    LD HL,#50           ; 80 bytes per line of
                        ; screen thus adding this
    ADD HL,DE           ; to de will move it onto
                        ; the next line of
                        ; screen
    EX DE,HL
    POP HL

HERE:
    JR MEM

                        ; remember this routine? It
                        ; prints a byte in HEX
                        ; see Amstrad Action 74
                        ; (November 1991)

HEX:
    LD B,2              ; loop count=2
    LD C,A
    RRCA
    RRCA
    RRCA
    RRCA                ; rotate byte for bits to
                        ; get nybble

MASKNUMBER:
    AND #F              ; 00001111 in binary (mask
                        ; out high byte)
    CP #A
    JR C,ENDROUTINE
    ADD A,#7

ENDROUTINE:
    ADD A,#30           ; add #30 so number is a
                        ; character
    CALL #BB5A
    LD A,C
    DJNZ MASKNUMBER
    RET

OUTSTRING:
    LD A,(DE)
    OR A                ; does A=0? (see Logical
                        ; Operators!)
    RET Z
    CALL #BB5A
    INC DE
    JR OUTSTRING

LINE:               DEFW #800   ; current pixel
                                ; line of map
COUNT:              DEFB 189    ; number of rows
                                ; in memory map
                                ; box
STRING: DEFM "      Memory Map by ANDY PRICE",0
                                ; six spaces in
                                ; the above
                                ; string
```

LISTING TWO

```
    ORG #9000
    ENT $

                    ; Listing Two
                    ; Demonstration of LDIR and
                    ; LDI instructions
                    ; SCREEN COPIER

                    LD HL,#C000
                    LD DE,#4000
                    LD BC,#3FFF
                    LDIR        ; Copy screen to
                                ; #4000

                    CALL #BC14  ; Clear screen
                    CALL #BB18  ; Wait for
                                ; keypress

                    LD HL,#4000 ; Replace screen
                                ; to #c000
                    LD DE,#C000
                    LD BC,#3FFF
       LOOP:        LDI         ; inc HL and DE
                                ; and dec BC
                    JP PO,END
                    JR LOOP
    END:            RET         ; Return control
                                ; to where called
                                ; from
```

Peripherals II

Modems and audio add-ons come under the spotlight this month, in the best guide to CPC purchases around (oh yes indeed)...

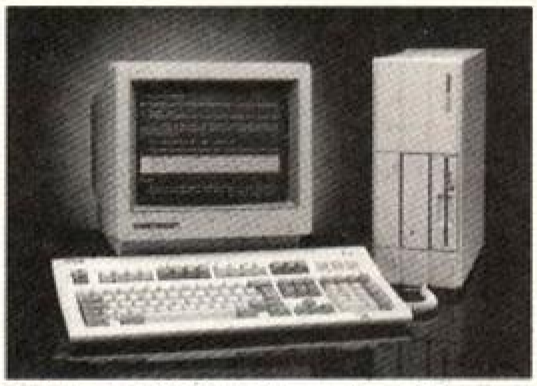
Last month we looked at romboxes, disk drives, memory upgrades and other odds and ends. This month we round up our look at stick-in objects with a waltz into the weird and wonderful world of comms (modems, like). And fish out those ear-plugs, punters, cos sonic stuff is going down on these pages too (*er, we're going to look at audio add-ons as well – ed*).

COMMS

Comms is short for 'communications', and basically is all about computers talking to each other. The most vital ingredient in this little tete-a-tete is the RS232 interface. Every computer needs to have one to be able to join the conversation.

Lots of computers have built-in RS232 interfaces (e.g. ST, PC, Mac), and only need a cable and a bit of comms software to get gabbing. In the case of the CPC, you'll need to buy an interface. These cost around £50-£60 (including the relevant software ROM ready installed), but Amstrad stopped making them three years ago. Companies like Maplin, Pace and Circkit also produce (produced?) versions, and you're more likely to pick up one of these. If you're lucky you might be able to find a mail order outlet, manufacturer or private advertiser willing to off-load one on you. But you'll have to hunt around.

Once you've got an RS232 plugged in, you only need a simple cable to connect your CPC to another computer. You can then transfer files that use standard file formats (eg ASCII) between the two. If the machine you want Arnold to chat to isn't in the same room, both computers will need to be attached to phone lines (via modems). They can then gab using the miracle of British Telecom (ahem).



• With an RS232 interface and a cable you can swap text files and certain types of information with other computers.

Modems

Any modem (except perhaps one stolen from a Martian spaceship) will work with your CPC. There are lots of different modems available, and these vary in price enormously, depending on how many features (bells and whistles) they have.

There are a number of different baud rates, the standard one (which most modems have) being V23 (1200/75). You can also get V21 (300/300), V22 (1200/1200), V22bis (2400/2400) and V23 viewdata (as V23, but viewdata emulation required). These are important when phone-gabbing to other computers or linking up with bulletin boards.



• To use a modem your CPC needs an RS232 interface, as made by KDS, which plugs into the machine's expansion port.

Comms software

The most commonly used (and easily available) comms software, other than that supplied with the RS232s, is the comms program on *Mini Office 2*. This, like everything on *MO2* is usable but fairly limited. The maximum transmit/receive rate is 1200.

Whilst this is fine for telephone 'interfacing' (most cheapish modems can only handle up to 1200 or 2400 anyway), it might prove a cherry trifle slow where same-room cable links are concerned.

Bulletin Boards

These are kind of electronic notice-boards, where you can download programs, send and receive mail with people all over Britain/the world, access loads of interesting info, play multi-player games, and all sorts of stuff.

Jargon-busting

COMMS

Baud Rate – The speed of data transmission, measured in bits per second. Transmit and receive baud rates can be different, in which case the speed is quoted as Transmit/Receive rates (eg 75/1200).

Bulletin Board – A computer system running software that allows users to call up the machine, download files and read and send messages to and from other users. (Also BBS – Bulletin Board System.)

Download – Techie term for copying a file from another system to your machine.

Hayes – Standard comms command language (initially devised by US modem manufacturer Hayes) to control your modem.

Mailbox – Area of bulletin board that stores messages sent to you by other users.

Modem – Modulator/demodulator. Device that connects the computer to the phone line.

RS232 – Industry standard interface that connects two pieces of quite different machinery together, allowing them to communicate.

Sysop – System operator. The person who runs a bulletin board.

Upload – The opposite of download. You transmit the file, another machine receives it.

ERS'
IDE



● Micronet, run by BT, was closed down last year, but there are still amateur 'bulletin boards' dotted around the country.

Micronet, the biggest BBS in Britain (run by British Telecom) closed down at the end of October. Though some small bulletin boards still exist (some including CPC sections), the rise of public domain libraries has signalled a massive slump in the BBS world, since much of the downloadable software (one of the main reasons for 'connecting') is PD and now available through a less trouble-fraught route (the post).

SOUND STUFF

There's a load of sound stuff you can get for the CPC. Last month we reviewed the Siren *Soundblaster* which let you attach some seriously loud speakers to the headphone socket of your machine.

The more music-orientated sound stuff can be divided into two types – the MIDI compatible and the non-MIDI compatible. MIDI compatibility is required for people who are really serious about the whole thing, as it allows you to hook musical instruments (such as keyboards) up to your system.

The best bit of MIDI kit around for the CPC is the *ERM Miditrack Performer* (which includes the necessary MIDI interface), though the *RAM Music Machine* is a pretty good "fun" alternative, as is Ubi Soft's *Equinoxe* music program (reviewed in the last issue of *Amstrad Action*.

If sound's your bag, check the details in our "What to Get" section, and start saving those pennies.

WHAT TO GET

COMMS

RS232 Interface
No known source ▪ £50-£60
The thingie you need to stick into the expansion port of your machine to enter the mystical world of comms. Buy any one you can find, since they're now hard to get hold of. **AA Recommended.**

MODEMS

(This is just a small selection chosen pretty much at random.)

Dataflex Design Pocket Biscom
081-543 6417 ▪ £174
Big brother of the (£125) Pocket Stradcom, featuring V21, V22, V22bis and V23 baud rates. BT approved. **AA Recommended.**

Hyundai HD2404M
0252 311332 ▪ £149
Big brother of the (£129) HMD2401, the Hyundai features V21, V22 and V22bis, but BT doesn't like it. (That's okay, we don't like BT.)

SOUND STUFF

Amdrum (Datel)
0782 744707 ▪ £14.99 (software on cass/disk)
Drum machine thingie. Plugs into the CPC expansion port and gives you "real" (ie digital) drum sounds.

EMR Miditrack Performer
0702 335747 ▪ £99 interface + cass/disk
MIDI interface plus sequencing software. Onscreen layout similar to multi-track recorder. Well gnarly. **AA Best Buy.**

EMR Miditrack Music Editor
0702 335747 ▪ £24.95 cass/disk
We don't know much about this (it only came out recently and we haven't seen it), but based on EMR's record it should be pretty good.

Foundation Step-Time Sequencer
0252 543945 ▪ £34.95 disk (128K only)
The only step-time sequencer available for the CPC, and not at all bad either. **AA Recommended.**

RAM Music Machine (Datel)
0782 744707 ▪ £49.99 interface + cass/disk
Musicabunga! It's a MIDI interface, sampler and sequencer in one. It's fairly limited, but quite fun.

Siren Soundblaster
061-724 7572 ▪ £34.95
Whack this speaker system onto your CPC, and really crank up the volume.

Speech Synthesiser & Sound Booster (Datel)
0782 744707 ▪ £29.99
Two thingies to plug in the back of your machine, and a couple of speakers to boot. The "speech" is very metallic sounding, but there you go.

SOUND

Drum machine – Hardware or software that digitally creates sounds not totally dissimilar to those a drum kit might make.

MIDI – Music Instrument Digital Interface. System with digital input and digital output, that includes its own programming language and allows MIDI-compatible musical instruments to be put under the control of your computer.

Sampler – Hardware or software that turns analogue sounds entered through microphone or lead into digital data.

Sequencer – Hardware or software that allows you to 'chain' up to 16 different instruments and put them in time sort of thing. It records each instrument and then plays them all together.

Synthesiser – Keyboard or computer prog that digitally creates sounds, constructing sound envelopes (which determine what sort of instrument etc it will sound like), adjusting attack, delay, reverb etc, and allowing you to play notes like on a piano.



● Music fans have plenty of CPC gadgets to choose from – including 'fun' music programs and serious MIDI packages.

BUYERS' GUIDE

Drive-em-ups

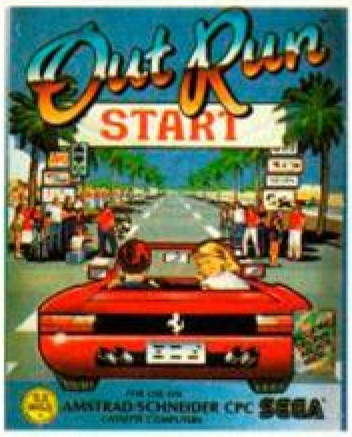
The screech of tyres, the smell of rubber on tarmac, the broken lock on the glove compartment... ADAM PETERS hops in and goes for a drive...

Motor racing and computer games were made for each other, in much the same way that Little and Large, Abbott and Costello, or Simon and Garfunkel were (*oh blimey! – ed*)

Unlike other game types (shoot-em-ups, arcade adventures) which rely on complex graphics backgrounds and loads of different sprites for much of their appeal, drivies just need to be fast, and have responsive controls and spot-on collision detection.

The first drivie to hit the arcades was *Night Driver*, with mono graphics about as advanced as *Pong's* (bit convenient that, being at night). Though graphically very inferior to games today, the gameplay (track scrolling towards you, etc) was exactly the same as most modern drive-em-ups – a testament to the simplicity (and longevity) of the whole concept. Later on, the arcades saw much more advanced implementations like *Turbo* and Atari's *Pole Position*.

From the simple steering wheel and high/low gear controls of *Pole Position* were added accelerator and brake pedals, multiple gears, horns, and all sorts. *Out Run* was the first arcade machine to feature a sit-in cabinet, an idea which has now become very much the norm (though vertical cabinet versions exist for the more space-conscious arcades, pubs, etc).



● ***Out Run* was one of the biggest success stories ever in the arcades – it arrived on the CPC in 1987. Later versions are faster and better.**



● **Not all drive-em-ups are seen from the driver's perspective. *Super Sprint* had a 'seen from above' viewpoint.**

Pole Position came to the Amstrad in 1985, in the form of *Grand Prix Rally II*. But it wasn't till December of that year that we had the first CPC racing classic, *3D Grand Prix*. This game gave you eight courses, and you had to finish in the top three to progress.

That nasty creature 'the clock' was soon added to racing games, giving time limits in which to reach check points. A new breed of 'chase' games would emerge (*Chase HQ* and *Out Run Europa* are two recent examples) where the clock was the prime enemy. Most standard racing games pitted you against both the clock and a target placing (gets).

Racing games haven't changed much over the years. Whilst there are a few 'unique' games (those with weird graphical styles – eg the true 3D graphics of *Hard Drivin'* and *Stunt Car Racer*), the mainstream ones have just got faster (cf the *Out Run* series) and more graphically detailed.

And long live drive-em-ups, that's what we say. Playing them is a lot safer than joy-riding for a start (and you don't get nicked).

BEST DRIVE-EM-UP
Continental Circus (Virgin)

It's a bit of an oldie, with no weird graphics or concepts. But it's fast and mega-addictive. Start off in Brazil, and try to battle your way through to America, France and beyond. Each course sees you trying to finish further up the field.

Haul your way up from 100th place to first. Yep, there's a lot of overtaking to be done. Whizzing round the corners at top speed, cutting in between the opposition. It's Fastville, Arizona, yes indeed.





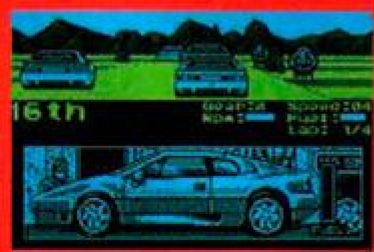
All right, every car's yellow and there's no real variety, depth or 'simulator' feel to it. But as arcade race-em-up convos go, this one goes like it's got a rocket up its bottom. What else matters?

● ***Continental Circus* is a couple of years old now, but still just about the best ever drivie game.**

DRIVE-EM-UPS TOP TEN



1) Continental Circus (*Virgin*)
Race round eight European tracks, competing for higher positions. **92% (AA50)**



2) Lotus Turbo Challenge (*Gremlin*)
Beaut mode 1 graphics, and split-screen two-player action. **93% (AA65)**



3) Power Drift (*Activision*)
Weird drag-car type thing where every corner is a corker. **91% (AA51)**

4) Chase HQ (*Ocean*)
Leap in a rozzer car and chase crims all over the place. **90% (AA54)**

5) Stunt Car Racer (*Microstyle*)
3D vector graphics ahoy in this race around a narrow wall. **96% (AA59)**

6) Burnin' Rubber (*Ocean*)
The console game you get with the GX4000/Plus, and pretty snazzy too. **92% (AA60)**

7) Supercars (*Gremlin*)
Supersprint-style small car overhead-view rotate-controls thingamy jig. **87% (AA66)**



8) Out Run Europa (*US Gold*)
Multi-vehicle pan-European avoid-the-police race. **84% (AA76)**

9) Live and Let Die (*Domark*)
Fast but difficult James Bond licence boat-em-up. **80% (AA39)**

10) Hard Drivin' (*Domark*)
Freescape-style3D graphics, action replays and a screen that really shakes! **80% (AA53)**

AAfterthought

What Christmas means to us

It's that magical time of year when people's thoughts turn to the meaningful things in life... like food, drink and utter sloth... the *AA* team presents its own thoughts on Christmas...

Angela: Christmas to me means lots of food, time off work and taping loads of movies... and, er, that's about it!

Loves: Carol services

Hates: All the shoppers drive into Bath and I can't park my car outside my house!

William (Angela's little 'un): William is only seven months old, so he's not thoroughly into theological debate yet...

Loves: Cream spinach, shouting, being sick on relatives.

Hates: Being kissed by relatives, finding out he's been given a dickie bow, waistcoat and cords for Christmas.

Rod: Humbug! Just a lot of stuff and nonsense. Frankly, I think we should all work straight through Christmas without a break.

Loves: Parties, Chrimbo films, Chrimbo dinner.

Hates: The 6cwt of Quality Street you always end up with (and those caramel things that stick to your teeth).

Adam P: Christmas? Oh, I'd forgotten about Christmas. Yes, well, it's all right.

Loves: Nothing. Oh, apart from staying in bed. That's all right.

Hates: Capitalist exploitative commercialism, turkey (being a veggie), people singing *Auld Lang Syne*.

Maryanne: Christmas to me means sleigh bells, and snow, and puppydogs' tails, and carol singing and fairy lights and... (*ack! – that's about as much as we can bear, thanks – ed*)

Loves: Watching people open the presents I've bought them, all the nice films they put on at Christmas.

Hates: The way you feel after you've had your Christmas dinner, seeing *The Railway Children* the 373rd time.

Adam W: Brilliant. I can't wait. (*Er, but haven't you got an entire issue of your magazine to get out in about three days from scratch, Adam?*) Oh, er, yes. Christmas? I hate it.

Loves: Tinkering with my ROM box, coming up with some new RSXs, going down the pub

Hates: The pub shutting.

WANTED!

Your honest opinion of AMSTRAD ACTION

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1.How did you buy this issue?

❒ I subscribe
❒ Newsagent delivered it to my home
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❒ Bought it on planned shop visit
❒ Just happened to see it and liked it

2. Rate *AMSTRAD ACTION* in terms of value for money:

❒ Excellent! ❒ Good
❒ Reasonable ❒ Poor ❒ Ripoff!

3. Out of ten, how much did this month's cover make you want to look inside? /10

4. How much does this issue appeal to you overall?.../10

5. How does it compare with previous issues you've seen?

❒ Much better! ❒ Slightly better ❒ About the same standard ❒ Slightly worse ❒ Much worse!

6. Rate out of ten this and any other computer magazines you read regularly:

AMSTRAD ACTION........................../10
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7. Out of ten, how useful did you find this month's buyers' guide? ..../10

8. What do you like *most* and then *least* about this issue?

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And I *least* like ....
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* Leave blank if you wish – but we may want to send you details of exclusive special offers

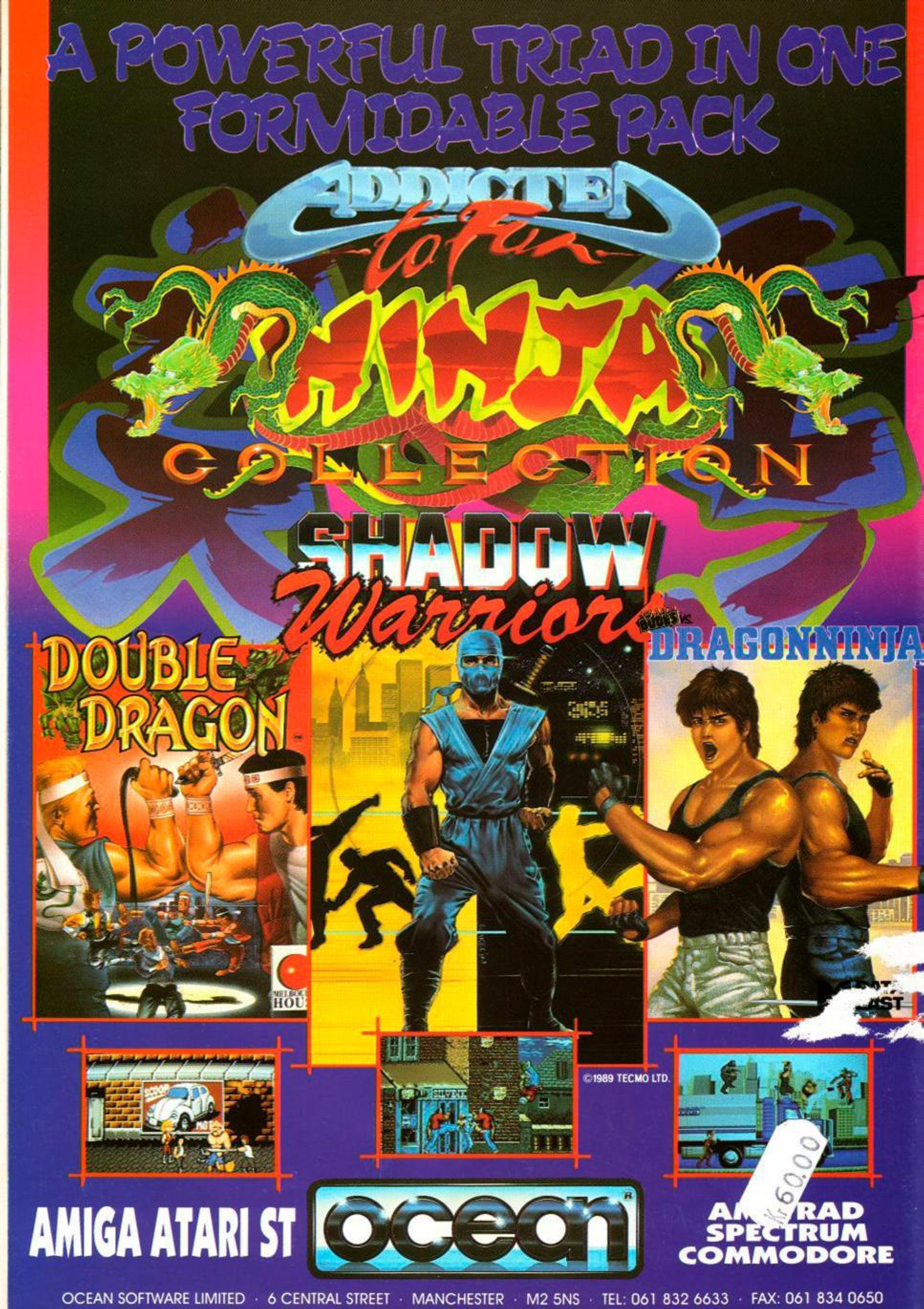
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